Monogatari

Tales from Old and New Japan

Edited by

Don C. Seitz

SEP 1 2 1932

The Library of
St. Olaf College
Northfield, Minn.

Accession No. 34137

Class 895 Vol.

Gift of Japan Society

F

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/monogatari0000seit

MONOGATARI

TALES FROM OLD AND NEW JAPAN

Selected and Edited by

DON C. SEITZ, LITT.D.

G. P. Putnam's Sons
New York & London
The Knickerbocker Press
1924

PL 890
.A254

Copyright, 1924
by
Don C. Seitz

Made in the United States of America

To

My Dear, Dark Daughter

FOREWORD

To understand a people, one must know their literature. Sentiment is more powerful than self-interest, and much less easy to control. Despite its progress in trade and manufactures, Japan is still a land of ideals; of stern views of honour and justice. Her pride is one of race, not superficial vanity. Her people have a solidarity that is given to few of the Nordic strain. They are unaffected by suffusions of alien blood or influence reacting from children who have ventured across the seas. Insular by location, with a thousand years of isolation behind them, they have formed in themselves a concrete state of mind, difficult for the Westerner to understand. It is to illuminate this that these tales of Nippon have been collected. They reveal the soul-life of the Japanese, their courage and self-sacrifice in maintaining the right as they see it.

Where possible credit has been given. Liberal use has been made of material found in *The Far East* and the *Japan Magazine*, both published in Tokio, for which the editor desires to proffer due acknowledgment.

THE HILL OF FATE

(By General Count Maresuki Nogi, Commander of the Japanese Forces at Port Arthur. Poem refers to 203-Metre Hill. Freely Translated by the Editor.)

Upon this height,
Steep as a wall, and high,
We stand triumphant.

Blood stains our feet
And all around
Corpses are littered.

Many are dead,
But deathless is the fame
Won by our courage.

Not since the gods
Came from the sky
Was there such conflict.

Sacred this mountain
Which from to-day
A new name shall bear:

"Hill of thy soul"—
Now and forever—
Eternal, immortal!

NOTE—General Nogi and his wife killed themselves September 13, 1912, that their souls might follow the Emperor Meiji into the hereafter.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Foreword	v
The Hill of Fate	vii
The Forty-Seven Ronins	3
Honest Kyusuke	35
The Heroism of Torii Katsutaka	58
How to Meet Death	77
The True Story of Hidari Jingoro	79
The Wrestling of a Daimio	89
The Carp in a Dream	106
Shuzo's Wife—A Story of True Love	113
The Bell of Kawagoye	124
The Fowler	128
The Fencing Master's Story	132
Oshichi of the Greengrocer	135
Winning without Hands	148
Mecca of the Pilgrim	152

PAGE

Ooka as a Matchmaker 164

Sundry Ghosts 170

The Rat Boy 177

The Doll Flowers 183

Ichinotani 194

The Priest's Staff 201

The Holy Houses of Sleep 206

The Living-Field River 210

A Vision of the Unseen 214

Bitter for Sweet 219

Human Destiny 223

An Old Man and a Mirror 227

A Dream or No? 231

Archery in the Olden Time 236

Confessions of Two Monks 240

Hayataro; the Faithful Dog . . . 245

Hidakagawa 254

The Sword 259

Ungo-Zenji 265

An Account of the Hara-Kiri . . . 280

MONOGATARI

ST. OLAF COLLEGE LIBRARY
NORTHFIELD, MINN.
34137

MONOGATARI

THE FORTY-SEVEN RONINS

From A. B. Mitford's "Tales of Old Japan"

The books which have been written of late years about Japan, have either been compiled from official records, or have contained the sketchy impressions of passing travellers. Of the inner life of the Japanese, the world at large knows but little: their religion, their superstitions, their ways of thought, the hidden springs by which they move—all these are as yet mysteries. Nor is this to be wondered at. The first Western men who came in contact with Japan—I am speaking not of the old Dutch and Portuguese traders and priests, but of the diplomatists and merchants of eleven years ago—met with a cold reception. Above all things, the native Government threw obstacles in the way of any inquiry into their language, literature, and history. The fact was that the Tycoon's Government—with whom alone, so long as the Mikado remained in seclusion in his sacred capital at Kioto, any relations were maintained—knew that the Imperial purple with which they

sought to invest their chief must quickly fade before the strong sunlight which would be brought upon it so soon as there should be European linguists capable of examining their books and records. No opportunity was lost of throwing dust in the eyes of the new-comers, whom, even in the most trifling details, it was the official policy to lead astray. Now, however, there is no cause for concealment; the Roi Faineant has shaken off his sloth, and his Maire du Palais, together, and an intelligible Government, which need not fear scrutiny from abroad, is the result; the records of the country being but so many proofs of the Mikado's title to power, there is no reason for keeping up any show of mystery. The path of inquiry is open to all; and although there is yet much to be learnt some knowledge has been attained, in which it may interest those who stay at home to share.

The recent revolution in Japan has wrought changes social as well as political; and it may be that when, in addition to the advance which has already been made, railways and telegraphs shall have connected the principal points of the Land of Sunrise, the old Japanese, such as he was and had been for centuries when we found him eleven short years ago, will have become extinct. It has appeared to me that no better means could be chosen of preserving a record of a curious and fast disappearing civilization, than the translation of some of the most interesting national legends and histories, together with other specimens of literature bearing upon the same

subject. Thus the Japanese may tell their own tale, their translator only adding here and there a few words of heading or tag to a chapter, where an explanation or amplification may seem necessary. I fear that the long and hard names will often make my tales tedious reading, but I believe that those who will bear with the difficulty will learn more of the character of the Japanese people than by skimming over descriptions of travel and adventure, however brilliant. The lord and his retainer, the warrior and the priest, the humble artisan and the despised Eta or pariah, each in his turn will become a leading character in my budget of stories; and it is out of the mouths of these personages that I hope to show forth a tolerably complete picture of Japanese society.

Having said so much by way of preface, I beg my readers to fancy themselves wafted away to the shores of the Bay of Yedo—a fair, smiling landscape: gentle slopes, crested by a dark fringe of pines and firs, lead down to the sea; the quaint eaves of many a temple and holy shrine peep out here and there from the groves; the bay itself is studded with picturesque fisher-craft, the torches of which shine by night like glow-worms among the outlying forts; far away to the west loom the goblin-haunted heights of Oyama, and beyond the twin hills of the Hakone Pass—Fuji-Yama, the Peerless Mountain, solitary and grand, stands in the centre of the plain, from which it sprang vomiting flames twenty-one centuries ago.

For a hundred and sixty years the huge mountain has been at peace, but the frequent earthquakes still

tell of hidden fires, and none can say when the red-hot stones and ashes may once more fall like rain over five provinces.

In the midst of a nest of venerable trees in Takanawa, a suburb of Yedo, is hidden Sengakuji, or the Spring-hill Temple, renowned throughout the length and breadth of the land for its cemetery, which contains the graves of the Forty-seven Ronins,[1] famous in Japanese history, heroes of Japanese drama, the tale of whose deeds I am about to transcribe.

On the left-hand side of the main court of the temple is a chapel, in which, surmounted by a gilt figure of Kwanyin, the goddess of mercy, are enshrined the images of the forty-seven men, and of the master

[1] The word Ronin means, literally, a "wave-man"; one who is tossed about hither and thither, as a wave of the sea. It is used to designate persons of gentle blood, entitled to bear arms, who, having become separated from their feudal lords by their own act, or by dismissal, or by fate, wander about the country in the capacity of somewhat disreputable knights-errant, without ostensible means of living, in some cases offering themselves for hire to new masters, in others supporting themselves by pillage; or who, falling a grade in the social scale, go into trade, and become simple wardsmen. Sometimes it happens that for political reasons a man will become Ronin, in order that his lord may not be implicated in some deed of blood in which he is about to engage. Sometimes, also, men become Ronins, and leave their native place for a while, until some scrape in which they have become entangled shall have blown over; after which they return to their former allegiance. Now-a-days it is not unusual for men to become Ronins for a time, and engage themselves in the service of foreigners at the open ports, even in menial capacities, in the hope that they may pick up something of the language and lore of Western folks. I know instances of men of considerable position who have adopted this course in their zeal for education.

whom they loved so well. The statues are carved in wood, the faces coloured, and the dresses richly lacquered; as works of art they have great merit—the action of the heroes, each armed with his favourite weapon, being wonderfully life-like and spirited. Some are venerable men, with thin, grey hair (one is seventy-seven years old); others are mere boys of sixteen. Close by the chapel, at the side of a path leading up the hill, is a little well of pure water, fenced in and adorned with a tiny fernery, over which is an inscription, setting forth that "This is the well in which the head was washed; you must not wash your hands or your feet here." A little further on is a stall, at which a poor old man earns a pittance by selling books, pictures, and medals, commemorating the loyalty of the Forty-seven; and higher up yet, shaded by a grove of stately trees, is a neat inclosure, kept up, as a sign-board announces, by voluntary contributions, round which are ranged forty-eight little tombstones, each decked with evergreens, each with its tribute of water and incense for the comfort of the departed spirit. There were forty-seven Ronins; there are forty-eight tombstones, and the story of the forty-eighth is truly characteristic of Japanese ideas of honour. Almost touching the rail of the graveyard is a more imposing monument under which lies buried the lord, whose death his followers piously avenged.

And now for the story.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century there

lived a daimio, called Asano Takumi no Kami, the Lord of the castle of Ako, in the province of Harima. Now it happened that an Imperial ambassador from the Court of the Mikado, having been sent to the Shogun[1] at Yedo, Takumi no Kami and another noble called Kamei Sama were appointed to receive and feast the envoy; and a high official, named Kira Kotsuke no Suke, was named to teach them the proper ceremonies to be observed upon the occasion. The two nobles were accordingly forced to go daily to the castle to listen to the instructions of Kotsuke no Suke. But this Kotsuke no Suke was a man greedy of money; and as he deemed that the presents which the two daimios, according to time-honored custom, had brought him in return for his instruction, were mean and unworthy, he conceived a great hatred against them, and took no pains in teaching them, but on the contrary rather sought to make laughing-stocks of them. Takumi no Kami, restrained by a stern sense of duty, bore his insults with patience; but Kamei Sama, who had less control over his temper, was violently incensed, and determined to kill Kotsuke no Suke.

[1] The full title of the Tycoon was Sei-i-tai-Shogun, "Barbarian-repressing Commander-in-chief." The style Tai Kun, Great Prince, was borrowed, in order to convey the idea of sovereignty to foreigners, at the time of the conclusion of the Treaties. The envoys sent by the Mikado from Kioto to communicate to the Shogun the will of his sovereign, were received with Imperial honours, and the duty of entertaining them was confided to nobles of rank. The title Sei-i-tai-Shogun was first borne by Minamoto no Yoritomo, in the seventh month of the year 1192 A.D.

One night when his duties at the castle were ended, Kamei Sama returned to his own palace, and having summoned his councillors[1] to a secret conference, said to them: "Kotsuke no Suke has insulted Takumi no Kami and myself during our service in attendance on the Imperial envoy. This is against all decency, and I was minded to kill him on the spot; but I bethought me that if I did such a deed within the precincts of the castle, not only would my own life be forfeit, but my family and vassals would be ruined: so I stayed my hand. Still the life of such a wretch is a sorrow to the people, and to-morrow when I go to Court I will slay him: my mind is made up, and I will listen to no remonstrance." And as he spoke his face became livid with rage.

Now one of Kamei Sama's councillors was a man of great judgment, and when he saw from his lord's manner that remonstrance would be useless, he said: "Your lordship's words are law; your servant will make all preparations accordingly; and to-morrow, when your lordship goes to Court, if this Kotsuke no Suke should be insolent, let him die the death." And his lord was pleased at this speech, and waited with impatience for the day to break, that he might return to Court and kill his enemy.

But the councillor went home, and was sorely

[1] Councillor, lit. "elder." The councillors of daimios were of two classes; the Karo, or "elder," an hereditary office, held by cadets of the Prince's family, and the Yonin, or "man of business," who was selected on account of his merits. These "councillors" play no mean part in Japanese history.

troubled, and thought anxiously about what his prince had said. And as he reflected, it occurred to him that since Kotsuke no Suke had the reputation of being a miser he would certainly be open to a bribe, and that it was better to pay any sum, no matter how great, than that his lord and his house should be ruined. So he collected all the money he could, and, giving it to his servants to carry, rode off in the night to Kotsuke no Suke's palace, and said to his retainers: "My master, who is now in attendance upon the Imperial envoy, owes much thanks to my Lord Kotsuke no Suke, who has been at so great pains to teach him the proper ceremonies to be observed during the reception of the Imperial envoy. This is but a shabby present which he has sent by me, but he hopes that his lordship will condescend to accept it, and commends himself to his lordship's favour." And, with these words, he produced a thousand ounces of silver for Kotsuke no Suke, and a hundred ounces to be distributed among his retainers.

When the latter saw the money, their eyes sparkled with pleasure, and they were profuse in their thanks; and begging the councillor to wait a little, they went and told their master of the lordly present which had arrived with a polite message from Kamei Sama. Kotsuke no Suke in eager delight sent for the councillor into an inner chamber, and, after thanking him, promised on the morrow to instruct his master carefully in all the different points of etiquette. So the councillor, seeing the miser's glee, rejoiced at the success of his plan; and having taken his leave re-

turned home in high spirits. But Kamei Sama, little thinking how his vassal had propitiated his enemy, lay brooding over his vengeance, and on the following morning at daybreak went to Court in solemn procession.

When Kotsuke no Suke met him, his manner had completely changed, and nothing could exceed his courtesy. "You have come early to Court this morning, my Lord Kamei," said he. "I cannot sufficiently admire your zeal. I shall have the honour to call your attention to several points of etiquette to-day. I must beg your lordship to excuse my previous conduct, which must have seemed very rude; but I am naturally of a cross-grained disposition, so I pray you to forgive me." And as he kept on humbling himself and making fair speeches, the heart of Kamei Sama was gradually softened, and he renounced his intention of killing him. Thus by the cleverness of his councillor, was Kamei Sama, with all his house, saved from ruin.

Shortly after this, Takumi no Kami, who had sent no present, arrived at the castle, and Kotsuke no Suke turned him into ridicule even more than before, provoking him with sneers and covert insults; but Takumi no Kami affected to ignore all this, and submitted himself patiently to Kotsuke no Suke's orders.

This conduct, so far from producing a good effect, only made Kotsuke no Suke despise him the more, until at last he said haughtily: "Here, my Lord of Takumi, the ribbon of my sock has come untied; be so good as to tie it up for me."

Takumi no Kami, although burning with rage at the affront, still thought that as he was on duty he was bound to obey, and tied up the ribbon of the sock. Then Kotsuke no Suke, turning from him, petulantly exclaimed: "Why, how clumsy you are! You cannot so much as tie up the ribbon of a sock properly! Any one can see that you are a boor from the country, and know nothing of the manners of Yedo." And with a scornful laugh he moved towards an inner room.

But the patience of Takumi no Kami was exhausted; this last insult was more than he could bear.

"Stop a moment, my lord," cried he.

"Well, what is it?" replied the other. And, as he turned round, Takumi no Kami drew his dirk, and aimed a blow at his head; but Kotsuke no Suke, being protected by the Court cap which he wore, the wound was but a scratch, so he ran away; and Takumi no Kami, pursuing him, tried a second time to cut him down, but, missing his aim, struck his dirk into a pillar. At this moment an officer, named Kajikawa Yosobei, seeing the affray, rushed up, and holding back the infuriated noble, gave Kotsuke no Suke time to make good his escape.

Then there arose a great uproar and confusion, and Takumi no Kami was arrested and disarmed, and confined in one of the apartments of the palace under the care of the censors. A council was held, and the prisoner was given over to the safeguard of a daimio, called Tamura Ukiyo no Daibu, who kept him in close custody in his own house, to the great grief of

his wife and of his retainers; and when the deliberations of the council were completed, it was decided that, as he had committed an outrage and attacked another man within the precincts of the palace, he must perform hara kiri,—that is, commit suicide by disembowelling; his goods must be confiscated and his family ruined. Such was the law. So Takumi no Kami performed hara kiri, his castle of Ako was confiscated, and his retainers having become Ronins, some of them took service with other daimios, and others became merchants.

Now amongst these retainers was his principal councillor, a man called Oishi Kuranosuke, who, with forty-six other faithful dependents, formed a league to avenge their master's death by killing Kotsuke no Suke. This Oishi Kuranosuke was absent at the castle of Ako at the time of the affray, which, had he been with his prince, would never have occurred; for, being a wise man, he would not have failed to propitiate Kotsuke no Suke by sending him suitable presents; while the councillor who was in attendance on the prince at Yedo was a dullard, who neglected this precaution, and so caused the death of his master and the ruin of his house.

So Oishi Kuranosuke and his forty-six companions began to lay their plans of vengeance against Kotsuke no Suke; but the latter was so well guarded by a body of men lent to him by a daimio called Uyesugi Sama, whose daughter he had married, that they saw that the only way of attaining their end would be to throw their enemy off his guard. With this object

they separated and disguised themselves, some as carpenters or craftsmen, others as merchants; and their chief, Kuranosuke, went to Kioto, and built a house in the quarter called Yamashina, where he took to frequenting houses of the worst repute, and gave himself up to drunkenness and debauchery, as if nothing were further from his mind than revenge. Kotsuke no Suke, in the meanwhile, suspecting that Takumi no Kami's former retainers would be scheming against his life, secretly sent spies to Kioto, and caused a faithful account to be kept of all that Kuranosuke did. The latter, however, determined thoroughly to delude the enemy into a false security, went on leading a dissolute life with harlots and winebibbers. One day, as he was returning home drunk from some low haunt, he fell down in the street and went to sleep, and all the passers-by laughed him to scorn. It happened that a Satsuma man saw this, and said: "Is not this Oishi Kuranosuke, who was a councillor of Asano Takumi no Kami, and who, not having the heart to avenge his lord, gives himself up to women and wine? See how he lies drunk in the public street! Faithless beast! Fool and craven! Unworthy the name of a Samurai!"[1]

And he trod on Kuranosuke's face as he slept, and spat upon him; but when Kotsuke no Suke's spies reported all this at Yedo, he was greatly relieved at the news, and felt secure from danger.

[1] Samurai, a man belonging to the Buke or military class, entitled to bear arms.

One day Kuranosuke's wife, who was bitterly grieved to see her husband lead this abandoned life, went to him and said: "My lord, you told me at first that your debauchery was but a trick to make your enemy relax in watchfulness. But indeed, indeed, this has gone too far. I pray and beseech you to put some restraint upon yourself."

"Trouble me not," replied Kuranosuke, "for I will not listen to your whining. Since my way of life is displeasing to you, I will divorce you, and you may go about your business; and I will buy some pretty young girl from one of the public-houses, and marry her for my pleasure. I am sick of the sight of an old woman like you about the house, so get you gone—the sooner the better."

So saying, he flew into a violent rage, and his wife, terror-stricken, pleaded piteously for mercy.

"Oh, my lord! unsay those terrible words! I have been your faithful wife for twenty years, and have borne you three children; in sickness and in sorrow I have been with you; you cannot be so cruel as to turn me out of doors now. Have pity! Have pity!"

"Cease this useless wailing. My mind is made up, and you must go; and as the children are in my way also, you are welcome to take them with you."

When she heard her husband speak thus, in her grief she sought her eldest son, Oishi Chikara, and begged him to plead for her, and pray that she might be pardoned. But nothing would turn Kuranosuke from his purpose, so his wife was sent away, with the

two younger children, and went back to her native place. But Oishi Chikara remained with his father.

The spies communicated all this without fail to Kotsuke no Suke, and he, when he heard how Kuranosuke, having turned his wife and children out of doors and bought a concubine, was grovelling in a life of drunkenness and lust, began to think that he had no longer anything to fear from the retainers of Takumi no Kami, who must be cowards, without the courage to avenge their lord. So by degrees he began to keep a less strict watch, and sent back half of the guard which had been lent to him by his father-in-law, Uyesugi Sama. Little did he think how he was falling into the trap laid for him by Kuranosuke, who, in his zeal to slay his lord's enemy, thought nothing of divorcing his wife and sending away his children! Admirable and faithful man!

In this way Kuranosuke continued to throw dust in the eyes of his foe, by persisting in his apparently shameless conduct; but his associates all went to Yedo, and having in their several capacities as workmen and pedlars contrived to gain access to Kotsuke no Suke's house, made themselves familiar with the plan of the building and the arrangement of the different rooms, and ascertained the character of the inmates, who were brave and loyal men, and who were cowards; upon all of which matters they sent regular reports to Kuranosuke. And when at last it became evident from the letters which arrived from Yedo that Kotsuke no Suke was thoroughly off his guard, Kuranosuke rejoiced that the day of

vengeance was at hand; and, having appointed a trysting-place at Yedo, he fled secretly from Kioto, eluding the vigilance of his enemy's spies. Then the forty-seven men, having laid all their plans, bided their time patiently.

It was now mid-winter, the twelfth month of the year, and the cold was bitter. One night, during a heavy fall of snow, when the whole world was hushed, and peaceful men were stretched in sleep upon the mats, the Ronins determined that no more favourable opportunity could occur for carrying out their purpose. So they took counsel together, and, having divided their band into two parties, assigned to each man his post. One band, led by Oishi Kuranosuke, was to attack the front gate, and the other, under his son Oishi Chikara, was to attack the postern of Kotsuke no Suke's house; but as Chikara was only sixteen years of age, Yoshida Chiuzayemon was appointed to act as his guardian. Further it was arranged that a drum, beaten at the order of Kuranosuke, should be the signal for the simultaneous attack; and that if any one slew Kotsuke no Suke and cut off his head he should blow a shrill whistle, as a signal to his comrades, who would hurry to the spot, and, having identified the head, carry it off to the temple called Sengakuji, and lay it as an offering before the tomb of their dead lord. Then they must report their deed to the Government, and await the sentence of death which would surely be passed upon them. To this the Ronins one and all pledged themselves. Midnight was fixed upon as the hour, and

the forty-seven comrades, having made all ready for the attack, partook of a last farewell feast together, for on the morrow they must die. Then Oishi Kuranosuke addressed the band, and said:—

"Tonight we shall attack our enemy in his palace; his retainers will certainly resist us, and we shall be obliged to kill them. But to slay old men and women and children is a pitiful thing; therefore, I pray you each one to take great heed lest you kill a single helpless person." His comrades all applauded this speech, and so they remained, waiting for the hour of midnight to arrive.

When the appointed hour came, the Ronins set forth. The wind howled furiously, and the driving snow beat in their faces; but little cared they for wind or snow as they hurried on their road, eager for revenge. At last they reached Kotsuke no Suke's house, and divided themselves into two bands; and Chikara, with twenty-three men, went round to the back gate. Then four men, by means of a ladder of ropes which they hung on to the roof of the porch, effected an entry into the courtyard; and, as they saw signs that all the inmates of the house were asleep, they went into the porter's lodge where the guard slept, and before the latter had time to recover from their astonishment, bound them. The terrified guard prayed hard for mercy, that their lives might be spared; and to this the Ronins agreed on condition that the keys of the gate should be given up; but the others tremblingly said that the keys were kept in the house of one of their officers, and

that they had no means of obtaining them. Then the Ronins lost patience, and with a hammer dashed in pieces the big wooden bolt which secured the gate, and the doors flew open to the right and to the left. At the same time Chikara and his party broke in by the back gate.

Then Oishi Kuranosuke sent a messenger to the neighbouring houses, bearing the following message: —"We, the Ronins who were formerly in the service of Asano Takumi no Kami, are this night about to break into the palace of Kotsuke no Suke, to avenge our lord. As we are neither night robbers nor ruffians, no hurt will be done to the neighbouring houses. We pray you to set your minds at rest." And as Kotsuke no Suke was hated by his neighbours for his covetousness, they did not unite their forces to assist him. Another precaution was yet taken. Lest any of the people inside should run out to call the relations of the family to the rescue, and these coming in force should interfere with the plans of the Ronins, Kuranosuke stationed ten of his men armed with bows on the roof of the four sides of the courtyard, with orders to shoot any retainers who might attempt to leave the place. Having thus laid all his plans and posted his men, Kuranosuke with his own hand beat the drum and gave the signal for attack.

Ten of Kotsuke no Suke's retainers, hearing the noise, woke up; and, drawing their swords, rushed into the front room to defend their master. At this moment the Ronins, who had burst open the door of the front hall, entered the same room. Then arose

a furious fight between the two parties, in the midst of which Chikara, leading his men through the garden, broke into the back of the house; and Kotsuke no Suke in terror of his life, took refuge, with his wife and female servants, in a closet in the verandah; while the rest of his retainers, who slept in the barrack outside the house, made ready to go to the rescue. But the Ronins who had come in by the front door, and were fighting with the ten retainers, ended by overpowering and slaying the latter without losing one of their own number; after which, forcing their way bravely towards the back rooms, they were joined by Chikara and his men, and the two bands were united in one.

By this time the remainder of Kotsuke no Suke's men had come in, and the fight became general; and Kuranosuke, sitting on a camp-stool, gave his orders and directed the Ronins. Soon the inmates of the house perceived that they were no match for their enemy, so they tried to send out intelligence of their plight to Uyesugi Sama, their Lord's father-in-law, begging him to come to the rescue with all the force at his command. But the messengers were shot down by the archers whom Kuranosuke had posted on the roof. So no help coming, they fought on in despair. Then Kuranosuke cried out with a loud voice: "Kotsuke no Suke alone is our enemy; let some one go inside and bring him forth dead or alive!"

Now in front of Kotsuke no Suke's private room stood three brave retainers with drawn swords. The first was Kobayashi Hehachi, the second was

Waku Handaiyu, and the third was Shimidzu Ikkaku all good men and true, and expert swordsmen. So stoutly did these men lay about them that for a while they kept the whole of the Ronins at bay, and at one moment even forced them back. When Oishi Kuranosuke saw this, he ground his teeth with rage, and shouted to his men: "What! did not every man of you swear to lay down his life in avenging his lord, and now you are driven back by three men?

"Cowards, not fit to be spoken to! to die fighting in a master's cause should be the noblest ambition of a retainer!" Then turning to his own son Chikara, he said, "Here, boy!—engage those men, and if they are too strong for you, die!"

Spurred by these words, Chikara seized a spear and gave battle to Waku Handaiyu, but could not hold his ground, and backing by degrees, was driven out into the garden, where he missed his footing and slipped into a pond; but as Handaiyu, thinking to kill him, looked down into the pond, Chikara cut his enemy in the leg and caused him to fall, and then crawling out of the water despatched him. In the meanwhile Kobayashi Hehachi and Shimidzu Ikkaku had been killed by the other Ronins, and of all Kotsuke no Suke's retainers not one fighting man remained. Chikara, seeing this, went with his bloody sword in his hand into a back room to search for Kotsuke no Suke, but he only found the son of the latter, a young lord named Kira Sahioye, who, carrying a halberd, attacked him, but was soon wounded and fled. Thus the whole of Kotsuke no Suke's men

having been killed, there was an end of the fighting; but as yet there was no trace of Kotsuke no Suke to be found.

Then Kuranosuke divided his men into several parties and searched the whole house, but all in vain; women and children weeping were alone to be seen. At this the forty-seven men began to lose heart in regret, that after all their toil they had allowed their enemy to escape them, and there was a moment when in their despair they agreed to commit suicide together upon the spot; but they determined to make one more effort. So Kuranosuke went into Kotsuke no Suke's sleeping-room, and touching the quilt with his hands, exclaimed, "I have just felt the bed-clothes and they are yet warm, and so methinks that our enemy is not far off. He must certainly be hidden somewhere in the house." Greatly excited by this, the Ronins renewed their search. Now in the raised part of the room, near the place of honour, there was a picture hanging; taking down this picture, they saw that there was a large hole in the plastered wall, and on thrusting a spear in they could feel nothing beyond it. So one of the Ronins, called Yazama Jiutaro, got into the hole, and found that on the other side there was a little courtyard, in which there stood an outhouse for holding charcoal and firewood. Looking into the outhouse, he spied something white at the further end, at which he struck with his spear, when two armed men sprang out upon him and tried to cut him down, but he kept them back until one of his comrades came up and killed one of the two men

and engaged the other, while Jiutaro entered the outhouse and felt about with his spear. Again seeing something white, he struck it with his lance, when a cry of pain betrayed that it was a man, so he rushed up, and the man in white clothes, who had been wounded in the thigh, drew a dirk and aimed a blow at him. But Jiutaro wrested the dirk from him, and clutching him by the collar, dragged him out of the outhouse. Then the other Ronin came up, and they examined the prisoner attentively, and saw that he was a noble-looking man, some sixty years of age, dressed in a white satin sleeping-robe, which was stained by the blood from the thigh-wound which Jiutaro had inflicted. The two men felt convinced that this was no other than Kotsuke no Suke, and they asked him his name, but he gave no answer, so they gave the signal whistle, and all their comrades collected together at the call; then Oishi Kuranosuke, bringing a lantern, scanned the old man's features, and it was indeed Kotsuke no Suke; and if further proof were wanting, he still bore a scar on his forehead where their master, Asano Takumi no Kami, had wounded him during the affray in the castle. There being no possibility of mistake, therefore, Oishi Kuranosuke went down on his knees, and addressing the old man very respectfully, said:

"My lord, we are the retainers of Asano Takumi no Kami. Last year your lordship and our master quarrelled in the palace, and our master was sentenced to hara kiri, and his family was ruined. We have come tonight to avenge him, as is the duty of

faithful and loyal men. I pray your lordship to acknowledge the justice of our purpose. And now my lord, we beseech you to perform hara kiri. I myself shall have the honour to act as your second, and when, with all humility, I shall have received your lordship's head, it is my intention to lay it as an offering upon the grave of Asano Takumi no Kami."

Thus, in consideration of the high rank of Kotsuke no Suke, the Ronins treated him with the greatest courtesy, and over and over again entreated him to perform hara kiri. But he crouched speechless and trembling. At last Kuranosuke, seeing that it was vain to urge him to die the death of a nobleman, forced him down, and cut off his head with the same dirk with which Asano Takumi no Kami had killed himself. Then the forty-seven comrades, elated at having accomplished their design, placed the head in a bucket, and prepared to depart; but before leaving the house they carefully extinguished all the lights and fires in the place, lest by any accident a fire should break out and the neighbours suffer.

As they were on their way to Takanawa, the suburb in which the temple called Sengakuji stands, the day broke; and the people flocked out to see the forty-seven men, who, with their clothes and arms all blood-stained, presented a terrible appearance; and every one praised them, wondering at their valour and faithfulness. But they expected every moment that Kotsuke no Suke's father-in-law would attack them and carry off the head, and made ready to die bravely sword in hand. However, they reached

Takanawa in safety, for Matsudaira Aki no Kami, one of the eighteen chief daimios of Japan, of whose house Asano Takumi no Kami had been a cadet, had been highly pleased when he heard of the last night's work, and he had made ready to assist the Ronins in case they were attacked. So Kotsuke no Suke's father-in-law dared not pursue them.

At about seven in the morning they came opposite to the palace of Matsudaira Mutsu no Kami, the Prince of Sendai, and the Prince, hearing of it, sent for one of his councillors and said: "The retainers of Takumi no Kami have slain their lord's enemy, and are passing this way; I cannot sufficiently admire their devotion, so, as they must be tired and hungry after their night's work, do you go and invite them to come in here, and set some gruel and a cup of wine before them."

So the councillor went out and said to Oishi Kuranosuke: "Sir, I am a councillor of the Prince of Sendai, and my master bids me beg you, as you must be worn out after all you have undergone, to come in and partake of such poor refreshment as we can offer you. This is my message to you from my lord."

"I thank you, sir," replied Kuranosuke. "It is very good of his lordship to trouble himself to think of us. We shall accept his kindness gratefully."

So the forty-seven Ronins went into the palace, and were feasted with gruel and wine, and all the retainers of the Prince of Sendai came and praised them.

Then Kuranosuke turned to the councillor and said, "Sir, we are truly indebted to you for this kind hospitality; but as we have still to hurry to Sengakuji, we must needs humbly take our leave." And, after returning many thanks to their hosts, they left the palace of the Prince of Sendai and hastened to Sengakuji, where they were met by the abbot of the monastery, who went to the front gate to receive them, and led them to the tomb of Takumi no Kami.

And when they came to their lord's grave, they took the head of Kotsuke no Suke, and having washed it clean in a well hard by, laid it as an offering before the tomb. When they had done this, they engaged the priests of the temple to come and read prayers while they burnt incense: first Oishi Kuranosuke burnt incense, and then his son Oishi Chikara, after them the other forty-five men performed the same ceremony. Then Kuranosuke, having given all the money that he had by him to the abbot, said:—

"When we forty-seven men shall have performed hara kiri, I beg you to bury us decently. I rely upon your kindness. This is but a trifle that I have to offer; such as it is, let it be spent in masses for our souls!"

And the abbot, marvelling at the faithful courage of the men, with tears in his eyes pledged himself to fulfil their wishes. So the forty-seven Ronins, with their minds at rest, waited patiently until they should receive the orders of the Government.

At last they were summoned to the Supreme Court,

where the governors of Yedo and the public censors had assembled; and the sentence passed upon them was as follows: "Whereas, neither respecting the dignity of the city nor fearing the Government, having leagued yourselves together to slay your enemy, you violently broke into the house of Kira Kotsuke no Suke by night and murdered him, the sentence of the Court is, that, for this audacious conduct, you perform hara kiri." When the sentence had been read, the forty-seven Ronins were divided into four parties, and handed over to the safe keeping of four different daimios; and sheriffs were sent to the palaces of those daimios in whose presence the Ronins were made to perform hara kiri. But, as from the very beginning they had all made up their minds that to this end they must come, they met their death nobly; and their corpses were carried to Sengakuji, and buried in front of the tomb of their master, Asano Takumi no Kami. And when the fame of this became noised abroad, the people flocked to pray at the graves of these faithful men.

Among those who came to pray was a Satsuma man, who, prostrating himself before the grave of Oishi Kuranosuke, said: "When I saw you lying drunk by the roadside at Yamashina, in Kioto, I knew not that you were plotting to avenge your lord; and, thinking you to be a faithless man, I trampled on you and spat in your face as I passed. And now I have come to ask your pardon and offer atonement for the insult of last year." With those words he prostrated himself again before the grave, and, draw-

ing a dirk from his girdle, stabbed himself in the belly and died. And the chief priest of the temple, taking pity upon him, buried him by the side of the Ronins; and his tomb still remains to be seen with those of the forty-seven comrades.

This is the end of the story of the forty-seven Ronins.

A terrible picture of fierce heroism which it is impossible not to admire. In the Japanese mind this feeling of admiration is unmixed, and hence it is that the forty-seven Ronins receive almost divine honours. Pious hands still deck their graves with green boughs and burn incense upon them; the clothes and arms which they wore are preserved carefully in a fireproof store-house attached to the temple, and exhibited yearly to admiring crowds, who behold them probably with little less veneration than is accorded to the relics of Aix-la-Chapelle or Treves; and once in sixty years the monks of Sengakuji reap quite a harvest for the good of their temple by holding a commemorative fair or festival, to which the people flock during nearly two months.

A silver key at once admitted me to a private inspection of the relics. We were ushered, my friend and myself, into a back apartment of the spacious temple, overlooking one of those marvellous miniature gardens, cunningly adorned with rockeries and dwarf trees, in which the Japanese delight. One by one, carefully labelled and indexed boxes containing the precious articles were brought out and opened by the chief priest. Such a curious medley of old rags and

scraps of metal and wood! Home-made chain armour, composed of wads of leather secured together by pieces of iron, bear witness to the secrecy with which the Ronins made ready for the fight. To have bought armour would have attracted attention, so they made it with their own hands. Old moth-eaten surcoats, bits of helmets, three flutes, a writing-box that must have been any age at the time of the tragedy, and is now tumbling to pieces; tattered trousers of what once was rich silk brocade, now all unravelled and befringed; scraps of leather, part of an old gauntlet, crests and badges, bits of sword handles, spear-heads and dirks, the latter all red with rust, but with certain patches more deeply stained as if the fatal clots of blood were never to be blotted out: all these were reverently shown to us. Among the confusion and litter were a number of documents, yellow with age and much worn at the folds. One was a plan of Kotsuke no Suke's house, which one of the Ronins obtained by marrying the daughter of the builder who designed it. Three of the manuscripts appeared to me so curious that I obtained leave to have copies taken of them.

The first is the receipt given by the retainers of Kotsuke no Suke's son in return for the head of their lord's father, which the priests restored to the family, and runs as follows:—

"MEMORANDUM:—
"ITEM. ONE HEAD.
"ITEM. ONE PAPER PARCEL.

"The above articles are acknowledged to have been received.

"Signed, { Sayada Magobei (Loc. sigill.)
Saito Kunai (Loc. sigill.)

"To the priests deputed from the Temple Sengakuji,

"His Reverence Sekishi,
"His Reverence Ichidon."

"Last year, in the third month, Asano Takumi no Kami, upon the occasion of the entertainment of the Imperial ambassador, was driven, by the force of circumstances, to attack and wound my Lord Kotsuke no Suke in the castle, in order to avenge an insult offered to him. Having done this without considering the dignity of the place, and having thus disregarded all rules of propriety, he was condemned to hara kiri, and his property and castle of Ako were forfeited to the State, and were delivered up by his retainers to the officers deputed by the Shogun to receive them. After this his followers were all dispersed. At the time of the quarrel the high officials present prevented Asano Takumi no Kami from carrying out his intention of killing his enemy, my Lord Kotsuke no Suke. So Asano Takumi no Kami died without having avenged himself, and this was more than his retainers could endure. It is impossible to remain under the same heaven with the enemy of lord or father; for this reason we have dared to declare enmity against a personage of so exalted rank. This

day we shall attack Kira Kotsuke no Suke, in order to finish the deed of vengeance which was begun by our dead lord. If any honourable person should find our bodies after death, he is respectfully requested to open and read this document.

"15th year of Genroku, 12th month.

"Signed, Oishi Kuranosuke, Retainer of Asano Takumi no Kami, and forty-six others."[1]

The third manuscript is a paper which the forty-seven Ronins laid upon the tomb of their master, together with the head of Kira Kotsuke no Suke:—

"The 15th year of Genroku, the 12th month, and 15th day. We have come this day to do homage here, forty-seven men in all, from Oishi Kuranosuke down to the foot-soldier, Terasaka Kichiyemon, all cheerfully about to lay down our lives on your behalf. We reverently announce this to the honoured spirit of our dead master. On the 14th day of the third month of last year our honoured master was pleased to attack Kira Kotsuke no Suke, for what reason we know not. Our honoured master put an end to his own life, but Kira Kotsuke no Suke lived. Although we fear that after the decree issued by the Government this plot of ours will be displeasing to

[1] It is usual for a Japanese, when bent upon some deed of violence, the end of which, in his belief, justifies the means, to carry about with him a document, such as that translated above, in which he sets forth his motives, that his character may be cleared after death.

our honoured master, still we, who have eaten of your food, could not without blushing repeat the verse, 'Thou shalt not live under the same heaven nor tread the same earth with the enemy of thy father or lord,' nor could we have dared to leave hell and present ourselves before you in paradise unless we had carried out the vengeance which you began. Every day that we waited seemed as three autumns to us. Verily, we have trodden the snow for one day, nay, for two days, and have tasted food but once. The old and decrepit, the sick and ailing, have come forth gladly to lay down their lives. Men might laugh at us, as at grasshoppers trusting in the strength of their arms, and thus shame our honoured lord; but we could not halt in our deed of vengeance. Having taken counsel together last night, we have escorted my Lord Kotsuke no Suke hither to your tomb. This dirk,[1] by which our honoured lord set great store last year, and entrusted to our care, we now bring back. If your noble spirit be now present before this tomb, we pray you, as a sign, to take the dirk, and striking the head of your enemy with it a second time, to dispel your hatred for ever. This is the respectful statement of forty-seven men."

The text, "Thou shalt not live under the same heaven with the enemy of thy father," is based upon the Confucian books. Dr. Legge, in his *Life and Teachings of Confucius*, p. 113, has an interesting

[1] The dirk with which Asano Takumi no Kumi disembowelled himself, and with which Oishi Kuranosuke cut off Kotsuke no Suke's head.

paragraph summing up the doctrine of the sage upon the subject of revenge.

"In the second book of the 'le Ke' there is the following passage:—'With the slayer of his father a man may not live under the same heaven; against the slayer of his brother a man must never have to go home to fetch a weapon; with the slayer of his friend a man may not live in the same State.' The lex talionis is here laid down in its fullest extent. The 'Chow Le' tells us of a provision made against the evil consequences of the principle by the appointment of a minister called 'The Reconciler.' The provision is very inferior to the cities of refuge which were set apart by Moses for the manslayer to flee to from the fury of the avenger. Such as it was, however, it existed, and it is remarkable that Confucius, when consulted on the subject, took no notice of it, but affirmed the duty of blood-revenge in the strongest and most unrestricted terms. His disciple, Tsze Hea, asked him, 'What course is to be pursued in the murder of a father or mother?' He replied, 'The son must sleep upon a matting of grass with his shield for his pillow; he must decline to take office; he must not live under the same heaven with the slayer. When he meets him in the market-place or the court, he must have his weapon ready to strike him.' 'And what is the course in the murder of a brother?' 'The surviving brother must not take office in the same State with the slayer; yet, if he go on his prince's service to the State where the slayer is, though he

meet him, he must not fight with him.' 'And what is the course in the murder of an uncle or cousin?' 'In this case the nephew or cousin is not the principal. If the principal, on whom the revenge devolves, can take it, he has only to stand behind with his weapon in his hand, and support him."

I will add one anecdote to show the sanctity which is attached to the graves of the Forty-seven. In the month of September, 1868, a certain man came to pray before the grave of Oishi Chikara. Having finished his prayers, he deliberately performed hara kiri,[1] and, the belly wound not being mortal, despatched himself by cutting his throat. Upon his person were found papers setting forth that, being a Ronin and without means of earning a living, he had petitioned to be allowed to enter the clan of the Prince of Choshiu, which he looked upon as the noblest clan in the realm; his petition having been refused, nothing remained for him but to die, for to be a Ronin was hateful to him, and he would serve no other master than the Prince of Choshiu: what more fitting place could he find in which to put an end to his life than the graveyard of these Braves? This happened at about two hundred yards' distance from my house, and when I saw the spot an hour or two later, the ground was all bespattered with blood, and disturbed by the death-struggles of the man.

[1] A purist in Japanese matters may object to the use of the words hara kiri instead of the more elegant expression Seppuku. I retain the more vulgar form as being better known, and therefore more convenient.

HONEST KYUSUKE

Translated for the Tokyo *Far East* by A. M.

Gonzaemon, the headman of the village of Tamamura, in the province of Kodzuke, whose family had from generation to generation enjoyed a large fortune, employed a number of servants. Among them was one named Kyusuke, who had been added to the household, on the recommendation of a peasant of the same village, as being exceedingly honest. Though he was very young, unlike many servants, he worked very hard and performed all his duties as well when no one observed him as when under the eye of his master. Gonzaemon, therefore, began to look upon him as a great acquisition and took a keen interest in him.

One day, he summoned Kyusuke to his room and said:

"Kyusuke, I am pleased to see that you always work faithfully, but I think I should be more pleased if you would leave off working at an earlier hour in the evening and go to bed at the same time as your fellow servants. If you continue to be so much more

industrious than they there will be complaints among them."

"My good master," answered the young man, "though I do not like to disobey you, I regret to say that I can never get to sleep before nine o'clock at night."

"You surprise me," said Gonzaemon. "But at least you can oblige me by remaining in bed until the usual hour for getting up in the morning."

"My good master," replied Kyusuke again, "I am very sorry to displease you so often, but mine is a hopeless case, for to be frank with you I cannot for the life of me stay abed after seven in the morning."

Now, you must know, that according to our old way of counting time, nine at night was midnight, and seven in the morning answered to four o'clock. Kyusuke, therefore never slept more than four hours every night, and his master on learning this was surprised beyond measure.

"What a wonder you are!" he exclaimed. "It is seldom one finds gentlemen in service such passionate lovers of work! How gratified I am to find such a notable exception in you. I trust you will not take my suggestion amiss; it was necessary in order that your fellow servants should not suffer in consequence of your zeal for work."

"I humbly beg your forgiveness for venturing to disobey your kind orders," said the young man respectfully.

"Don't beg my forgiveness," said his master, "for by so doing you put me in an awkward position."

After considering for a few moments while the servant waited silently for further orders, Gonzaemon resumed:

"Well, Kyusuke, I have another suggestion to offer you. You know that you are your own master while your fellow servants are asleep. I do not wish you to work for me in those hours so if you do not wish to rest employ that time in making sandals for your own profit. I will see that you are provided with plenty of straw."

"My good master, you are very kind, but I fear it is not right that a servant should use any of his time in work for his own profit."

Thus Kyusuke once more baffled the kind intentions of his master. Gonzaemon was struck with his faithfulness.

"If you persist in refusing all my proposals I shall be at a loss what to do with you," he said. "So be pleased to do as I request you only this once."

Kyusuke could not refuse his master's kindness so delicately offered, and he consented to use his spare time for his own profit. Henceforth the early morning and late evening hours were devoted to the task of making waraji or straw sandals which he sold to a kitchenware dealer in the village, thereby making a small but regular income, every sen of which he entrusted to his kind master for safe keeping. Soon the young servant's diligence became known and the country people encouraged his industry by always asking for the "Kyusuke waraji" in preference to any other. This naturally pleased the dealer who

continually pressed Kyusuke for further supplies. Gonzaemon, likewise pleased at the success of his plan, determined to lend out the money in his charge so as to increase the amount by good interest. In this he found no difficulty, for people had the idea that some luck attached itself to anything connected with the honest servant and were only too glad to be accommodated with loans out of his savings.

Thus eight years passed away and Kyusuke was still a servant in the household of Gonzaemon. One day the latter called the young man into his apartment and addressed him as follows:

"My dear Kyusuke, time indeed flies like an arrow, as the proverb says. Eight years have elapsed since I was so fortunate as to take you into my service. You have never squandered your wages as other servants do. Setting apart a certain amount for small personal expenses you have regularly committed to my care all that you earned. I should certainly have proved but a poor banker had I not sought some profitable investment for your deposits. All these years I have been lending out your money at a moderate rate and it is astonishing to find how much your capital now amounts to. Behold! Your savings with interest and compound interest now reach the sum of one hundred ryo! Now, what do you propose to do with all this money?"

"My good master," said Kyusuke, quite taken aback at the idea of such wealth. "You must be joking!"

"Not at all; it is as I say. Will you continue to

lend it out, or would you prefer to dispose of it in some other way? It is for you to decide."

"A hundred ryo!" gasped Kyusuke. "Did you really say 'one hundred ryo?'"

"A hundred ryo!" replied his master smiling.

"It is unbelievable!" said Kyusuke.

"Your own industry is responsible for it," said Gonzaemon. "Now tell me what you are going to do with it."

Kyusuke pondered long and deeply. At length he spoke. "Kind master, if you would not think it taking an unpardonable liberty, I should much like to take the money and pay a short visit to my native place next spring."

"By all means," said Gonzaemon. "Do you know of a good investment in your native place?"

"No," answered Kyusuke, readily enough now. "But you will understand better if I tell you a little of my family history. Excuse the liberty I take in troubling you with my affairs. I am the second son of a peasant, Kyusaemon by name, living in the village of Shimo-Ogita-mura, near Nanao, in the province of Noto. My elder brother, after leading a dissipated life and causing his parents much grief suddenly left home and has never been heard of since. My mother died soon after and my father married again, a widow with one daughter. Before long my step-mother took it into her head to adopt a son to marry her daughter and succeed my father as head of the family. Me she hated and consequently treated me so unkindly that I was soon convinced it

would be for the happiness of all parties that I should leave home and go right away. So one day, leaving a letter of apology behind me I secretly came away. At first I had rather a hard time of it, but since I was so lucky as to become your servant I have had nothing to complain of. I cannot sufficiently thank you for all your kindness to me."

Here Kyusuke paused, and bowed low, while tears filled his eyes. Conquering his emotion he resumed:

"One hundred ryo! the largest sum of money I have ever set eyes on, I owe entirely to your goodness—how can I thank you! That I may make a proper use of your gift—for so I consider it—I shall return to my father, and with this money buy him some rice fields. In addition, should my step-sister still remain single I shall try to find her a suitable husband. Having done this and established my family so that it will be in no danger of extinction, I shall make all haste to return to you and beg to offer you my life-long service as some small way of requiting all you have done for me."

Gonzaemon was greatly touched.

"Kyusuke," he said, "you are a noble fellow! A dutiful son as well as a faithful servant. I admire your laudable intention. 'To your old home return in splendor' says an old proverb, so Kyusuke, return in splendor indeed! I will make it my business to provide the clothes you shall wear and I will also see that you have suitable presents to take to all your relations."

Thus the conversation ended, and Kyusuke retired to perform his usual vocations.

Early the following year, in spite of his servant's remonstrances, Gonzaemon, as good as his word, prepared all the necessary garments for Kyusuke to wear in order to make a good impression on his visit home, and presents for each member of his family. Farther, he pressed upon Kyusuke's acceptance a short sword for protection on his journey, ten ryo for travelling expenses, and five ryo as a parting gift. Producing Kyusuke's one hundred ryo he said:—

"Now, my dear Kyusuke, you had better not carry this large sum in cash for fear you might get robbed on the way; I advise you to send it by Bill of Exchange."

"Indeed, no, good master," replied Kyusuke. "That is quite unnecessary; who would suspect that a fellow of my sort had any money about him and attempt to rob me? It will be quite safe in the bosom of my dress."

"But you might lose it in some other way," persisted Gonzaemon, "You had better do as I say,—one cannot be too much on one's guard while travelling."

"Do not be uneasy on my account," he said, "I will be careful."

"As you please, Kyusuke; but at least listen to me in one thing, while on your journey always make it a rule to start late in the morning, and to put up early in the evening. Above all never make a travelling companion, and do not speak of your affairs."

"I will bear in mind what you say, and most cer-

tainly follow your advice," said Kyusuke. "A thousand thanks for all your favours, kind master, I can never forget all I owe to you."

With affectionate words on either side Kyusuke and his master parted and the young man set out on his journey homewards. But once upon the road the dutiful son, too eager to set eyes once more on the village of his forefathers, was indiscreet enough to travel from the earliest hour of the day till late at night. So it was, that when he was in the neighbourhood of Oiwake, in the province of Shinano, he one night lost his way in the darkness and after a long search of five or six ri, found himself in the middle of an extensive moor without a trace of human habitation.

"What shall I do?" he asked himself. "I fear I have been too rash. Had I followed my master's advice I should not be in this plight. It is only what I deserve."

Plodding on Kyusuke was over-joyed after a time to observe a glimmer of light in the distance. Taking heart at this sign of a dwelling of some kind he bent his weary eyes toward it, and by and by came to a tumbledown cottage which appeared to be the only habitation for miles around. Kyusuke went up to the door and called for admittance.

"Be good enough to show favour to a stranger! I am very sorry to disturb you at this late hour but I have lost my way and cannot find the road. Please let me in and tell me how to get to the nearest inn."

The door opened and a woman appeared. She

was about thirty and poorly dressed, and her coiffure was of a mean style, but there was something in her person that seemed to contradict the idea that her birth was as low as her surroundings.

"Come in," she said, "but you must not stay. I am indeed sorry for you, for you stand in the middle of one of Shinano's many moors. Which ever way you turn you must walk about five ri before you come to another house."

Kyusuke being very tired requested the woman to give him a night's lodging, but she shook her head.

"Why did you come here?"

"I have told you; I lost my way and I saw a light. You cannot be so inhuman as to refuse one shelter for a few hours—I ask no more."

"You will not want to stay when I tell you this is the house of a robber—a highwayman."

"A robber!" Kyusuke thinking of his treasure was alarmed. "Excuse me, I must go on at once."

"Will you rest for a few moments?"

"By no means. How can I sit down in what I have learned is the residence of a highwayman? Allow me to say Good-night! I am much obliged to you."

Kyusuke was for going at once but the woman stopped him.

"Good traveller, I must tell you that you are encompassed with danger in every direction. After all, I think the safest course for you to pursue is to remain here for the night and I will hide you from my husband. He will not be back for some time yet."

The manner and speech of the woman inspired

confidence, so Kyusuke deemed it prudent to abide by her advice. Taking off the large bamboo hat that he wore as a protection from both sun and rain, he sat down on the boarded floor of the kitchen glad to rest his weary limbs at last. The woman hurriedly prepared a simple supper for him, of which he partook with relish, though in haste, as he feared the return of the master. The woman then led him to a wood shed at the back of the cottage and said:

"You would be in great danger should my husband discover you. So keep yourself hidden in this shed, and do not mind a little discomfort. As soon as it is day and my husband goes out I will let you out and you can continue your journey in safety."

Kyusuke thanked her warmly, and had not long ensconced himself among the piles of firewood, making himself as comfortable as he could under the circumstances, when he heard a sound that caused his heart to leap into his mouth.

"O-Nami, I have returned."

"Oh, is it you at last!" welcomed the wife.

"How cold it is! Confound those killing winds that blow down from Mt. Asama! O-Nami!"

"Yes; what is it?"

"Whose hat is that?"

"Hat? What hat?"

"Come, no equivocations! There is a strange hat on the floor, and you know whose it is. Out with it? I don't like this underhand way you have acquired of hiding things from me. You are concealing someone in the house!"

"Indeed, no! Why should I want to conceal anyone."

"Then how did this bamboo hat get here? Do you want me to believe that the wind blew it in, as ours is the only building to check its course for miles around? Come, woman, speak up!"

There was the sound of quick movement, and a cry——

"Mercy, mercy . . ."

"Come, speak up or you are a dead woman!"

Kyusuke, in hiding in the wood shed, could imagine the scene.

"This is terrible!" he thought. "How could I be such a fool as to forget my hat! It may cost the woman her life!"

The noise in the cottage increased mingled with the shrieks of the poor woman and the threats of her enraged husband. Kyusuke stole out of his hiding place and peeped cautiously through a crack in the door. To his horror he found the man was dragging his wife round the room by her long hair with one hand, while he repeatedly struck her with the other. At this sight Kyusuke, forgetting his own fears, burst in.

"Sir! sir, all the money I have about me I will give you! The woman is not to blame—spare her!"

"Who spoke?"

The infuriated man checked his wrath for a moment to stare in astonishment at the unexpected apparition.

Taking advantage of the lull Kyusuke quickly

produced his hundred ryo along with what remained of the money his master had given him for the journey and the little gift.

"Here, good sir, take all—I have no more—and do not punish your wife for a kind action. I only am to blame."

The ruffian took no further notice of his wife, whom he left sobbing on the floor, but turned to take up with greedy hands the rich store offered by the traveller. Not content with money, however, he coolly demanded all the clothes Kyusuke was wearing and possessed himself of the dagger into the bargain. Poor Kyusuke, all the earnings of eight hard-working years had gone to fill the pockets of a villainous gentleman of the road!

"In pity, give me back my clothes, I cannot go either back or forward in this naked state," pleaded Kyusuke. "And my dagger—I need it to defend myself from gentlemen such as you—though I have nothing of which to be robbed now," he added ruefully.

"Take these," said the robber, throwing him a wadded garment and a girdle, both much the worse for wear.

"Thank you very much, but now my dagger. . . ."

"That I shall find useful myself."

"But without it I shall be at the mercy of any dog on the way. . ."

"What a troublesome fellow you are! But no one shall say I left you without the means of defence.

Here, take this, and begone!" With these words the robber produced from a cupboard an old sword, doubtless acquired from some former luckless wayfarer and handed it to Kyusuke, adding:

"After leaving this house go straight on till you come to a broad road, follow this always turning to the north and in due time you will reach Oiwake. Now go!"

"Again my best thanks," said Kyusuke bowing low, then turning to the poor woman he said softly:

"I am very sorry to have brought all this trouble on you, forgive me."

"No, no, it was I who was to blame, but indeed, I did it for the best."

"A truce to this nonsense!" cried the robber impatiently. "Here is a torch to light your way; be off before I change my mind about letting you go."

"Thou, master and mistress, farewell to you." And with these words Kyusuke accepted the torch held out to him and hastened away. But the fates seemed to be still against him; for no sooner had he set forth than the rain which had begun to come down in torrents put out his light so that he was in complete darkness. But this misfortune in reality saved his life, for the robber had given Kyusuke a light for no other purpose than that it would serve his own evil intent, which was to shoot the traveller as soon as his back was turned. True, he might have dispatched him before he left the cottage, but in that case his wife would have interfered and been troublesome, besides he hardly liked to turn upon

Kyusuke and murder him just as he had so ungrudgingly given up all he had. Wicked man as he was, he could not bring himself to such a dastardly action as that. However, as soon as Kyusuke closed the door the robber, weapon in hand, softly opened it again and crept out, intending to take aim by the light that Kyusuke carried. But, alas for him and fortunately for his intended victim, the heavy rain, had extinguished the light, so muttering "lucky dog!" he re-entered his home, leaving Kyusuke to continue his way unmolested.

On arriving at Oiwake, Kyusuke drew a long breath and congratulated himself on his narrow escape, though how narrow he did not realize. There he gave up his cherished idea of visiting his old home, determined to retrace his steps to his master's house begging his way as he had now no money to pay for even the poorest fare. Gonzaemon received him very kindly, though having heard the details of Kyusuke's adventure he could not resist saying:

"Did I not warn you? If you had drawn a draft for the money as I advised you this would never have happened. But it is too late to talk of that now. You were lucky to escape with the loss of your property—you might have lost your life as well. Do not give way to despair. Rest for a few days and then set to work again."

While speaking to Kyusuke the master happened to take up the old sword he had got from the robber. The thread round the hilt was frayed and coming off. He tried to draw the blade, but it was so rusty with

disuse that it struck fast in the sheath. Bending over it his eye was caught by the decorative stud which he was convinced was not of brass. Thinking the weapon might be of more value than appeared at first sight he sent for a dealer in old wares, Kichibei by name, and requested his opinion as to its merits, pretending that it belonged to one of his friends who wished to dispose of it to the best advantage.

The dealer, with the skill acquired by long practice, soon withdrew the blade from its sheath and after closely examining it for some time, said:

"The sword is a valuable one. The blade is so rusty that I cannot say anything for certain about it, but the ornamentation is undoubtedly of solid gold. The pommel and stud are of Goto's engraving, and the guard itself being by Nobuic, is worth at least thirty-five ryo. I am willing to give one hundred and thirty ryo for the decorative parts alone."

These words quite surpassed the expectations of Gonzaemon. He sent the dealer away on the pretext that he should consult his friend, and then told Kyusuke what he had said.

At this undreamt of good luck Kyusuke was struck dumb, as well he might be. Gonzaemon, however, encouraged by Kichibei's opinion thought that a Yedo expert might value the sword even more highly, and be more able as well as willing to purchase it at a higher rate. A blade in so elaborate and rich a mounting could hardly fail to prove a good one, and knowing something of the estimation in which

such workmanship was held he decided to go up to Yedo himself and do the best he could for his faithful but simple servant.

In Yedo he submitted the weapon to the examination of Honami, the ablest connoisseur in matters of this sort, who pronounced the blade to be the undoubted work of Bizen Nagamitsu, one of the ten clever disciples of Masamune, although the name of the maker was not on it. Further, in proof of his belief he offered to buy it for eight hundred ryo, an offer Gonzaemon was more than glad to accept.

The business that took him to the city so satisfactorily concluded, he hastened home with all speed and gave the astonished Kyusuke an account of the transaction. Laying the money before him he concluded with these words:

"My dear Kyusuke, see how advantageous it is to be honest always! Your misfortune has proved a blessing in disguise. Heaven approving of your upright conduct has been pleased to grant you this great favour. How grateful we should be! Now go home again with all dispatch, but this time take my advice and do not carry such a large sum in cash."

As soon as Kyusuke recovered from his surprise he bowed respectfully to his master, and spoke as follows:

"My good master, you overwhelm me with obligation! I have no words in which to express my feelings. But far be it from me to appropriate all this large sum; I hesitate to displease you, but only

one hundred ryo do I consider is mine, for I left the robber's house poorer by just that amount, and that sum I shall send home by money order as you advise. As for the rest, after you deduct the expenses of your journey to Yedo, I shall carry it all to the robber. The sword was his and I can not make myself rich at the expense of a poor highwayman—that would never do!"

Gonzaemon was much struck with admiration at this disinterested conduct on the part of his servant.

"My good fellow," he said warmly, "your honesty puts me to shame! But surely you will not unnecessarily risk your life for such a purpose. As for my journey to Yedo, that is purely my affair and you will dismiss it from your mind. But consider before you act so rashly as to put yourself again into the power of a desperate man."

But Kyusuke was obstinate as well as honest.

"Far be it from me to go in opposition to your wishes," he said, respectfully. "But in this thing only I beg you to let me have my own way. I am loath to cause you any uneasiness, but villain as he is he will surely not harm a man who comes to do him a good turn. There can be no danger."

Gonzaemon, knowing from experience that further persuasions would be of no avail, reluctantly permitted his servant to do as he proposed. After sending one hundred ryo to his father by Money Order, he tied up the seven hundred ryo remaining in a little package which he put in his bosom and once more set off on his travels. Contrary to his

former experience, he had this time no little difficulty in finding the cottage of the highwayman; at last, however, he came to the door which in response to his call was again opened by the kind-hearted mistress. Kyusuke bowed, and in polite terms thanked her for the favours he received at her hands on a former occasion. The woman was much surprised, but controlling her emotions she said:

"My good traveller, I do not know how to apologize for what I did to you the other day. Nevertheless, you have come again! I shall be still more grieved if you are robbed a second time. Fortunately for you—though I am sorry—my husband is sick in bed. Please make all haste to retrace your steps."

Kyusuke's kind heart was moved with compassion for the sick man and his wife.

"Indeed, I sympathize with you both. Allow me to pay my respects to him and inquire after his health."

"No, no, sir! He is suffering now but his avarice may be excited at the sight of you. Should he again demand all you have with you you may again be inconvenienced."

"Be quite easy on that score. I am here to bring him some money."

"What do you mean?"

"You are naturally surprised. Let me in and you will know. I must see your husband."

Reluctantly the woman let him come into the house. Making his way to an inner room where the

sick man was lying groaning, Kyusuke saluting him in the usual manner, inquired:

"My friend, how are you?"

"This is the traveller you treated so unkindly a short time ago," explained the woman, seeing that her husband did not recognize the visitor.

"Which one?" asked the robber, sourly.

"Sir, it is I. I do not know how to requite you for the kindness you showed me the other day. But now I must tell you what brings me here again."

Thereupon Kyusuke proceeded to inform the robber what had happened about the sword and laying the packet of money by the bed, concluded as follows:

"From the price paid for the sword I have deducted one hundred ryo as my due, sending it to my home by Money Order. All the rest I have brought with me and it is in that package except a small sum I have taken the liberty to keep for my travelling expenses. I have not quite enough to take me to my home in Noto province, and then back to my master's house in Yamamura, Kodzuke province, as I shall be much obliged if you will kindly allow me a little more. As for the remainder you are welcome to appropriate it all. Ah, how glad I am to be relieved of the charge of this money, which has been a source of constant anxiety ever since I set out on this journey."

The sick man appeared to be much impressed by the simple recital of Kyusuke's tale. After a pause he said:

"You say your home is in Nito; from what part of the province do you come?"

I was born in Ogita-mura, near Nanao. My name is Kyusuke, and I am the son of a peasant called Kyuzaemon."

"Was your elder brother called Kyutaro?"

"How do you know that?"

"You may well wonder. Kyusuke, I have hardly the heart to tell you. . . . I am Kyutaro, fallen as you see to the depths of degradation and misery."

"My elder brother, Kyutaro!"

"With shame I say it, yes."

The two brothers embraced with tears. O-Nami was surprised beyond measure at the pathetic sight.

"Are you indeed my husband's brother? Forgive me! I did not guess it," and she burst into tears.

Kyusuke hastened to console her.

"I beg you will not cry. Forgive my rudeness in not knowing who you were, and forgive also the great trouble I have occasioned you."

Kyutaro, whose conscience was at last smitten at the thought of all his misdeeds, now took a hunting knife lying within reach, and planted it in the side of his abdomen. His wife and brother, too late to stop the rash act, caught his hands.

"Stop, what madness is this!" cried Kyusuke.

"My husband, oh what have you done!" exclaimed his wife.

Kyutaro was almost beyond speaking. In a faint voice he said painfully:

"Brother, wife, how can I continue to live?

Kyusuke, when I recall how vile I have been I am stricken with remorse and shame. When you were here last I would have killed you, little dreaming you were my brother. O-Nami's remonstrances were of no avail, only Providence saved you by miraculously putting out the torch you carried. My evil designs have all turned to your good fortune; the sword I gave to encourage you the sooner to leave this house proves a precious gift and brings you a large sum of money. Instead of profiting by it you take the trouble to come and give it to me. Kyusuke, how scrupulous you are! Your nature is honest and spotless as the snow—mine black as charcoal! I have filled up the measure of my wickedness; the disease from which I am now suffering is the punishment of Heaven. What you have just told me will serve like the blessing of a holy priest to enlighten my path to the other world. I am determined to die and join my dead mother—to offer her my humble apologies for my bad conduct. There is only one thing that disturbs me at this last moment—it is the thought of O-Nami. It was her misfortune that she married such a wretched husband as I have been, but her heart is pure and tender. Look after her when I am gone—be kind to her, Kyusuke, I entreat you."

Thus Kyutara, unable to bear the stings of an awakened conscience, succeeded in disengaging himself from the arms of his wife and brother and died a manly death.

Kyusuke and O-Nami mingled their tears over the lifeless body, but the departed spirit was not to

be recalled by their lamentations. So they strove to conquer their grief and buried the dead robber in the best manner possible under the circumstances.

Kyusuke then started for home taking the money he had brought so far, and the hair of the deceased. O-Nami accompanied him. Before leaving the cottage they set fire to it that no one might ever use it for evil purposes again.

On reaching home Kyusuke told his old father, his stepmother and her daughter, all that had befallen him since he left them so many years ago. The hundred ryo sent in advance had already come to hand, and he now added to it all the money he had on his person. He also produced the hair of the dead man. Old Kyuzaemon lamented over the sad fate of his undutiful son, but at the same time rejoiced in the possession of so admirable a younger son as Kyusuke. The stepmother, now repenting of her selfishness of former days, sought his forgiveness. One and all took pity on O-Nami in her great misery. It is wonderful how one man's goodness works upon the hearts of those about him. It was the desire of his relations that Kyusuke should succeed to his father and carry on the family name, but he firmly declined and arranged that his stepsister should get a husband and that the new couple should be the heirs of the old man after his demise. As for O-Nami, she was determined to become a nun and devote her remaining days to religious services for the soul of her dead husband, her sole concern being prayer for the blotting out of his sins. It was decided to build a hermit-

age for her in order that she might pass her life undisturbed. This is the origin of the Nanao nunnery.

Having settled his family affairs to the satisfaction of all concerned, Kyusuke was happy to accept out of the cash he had brought home a small sum sufficient to carry him back to his master's home in Kodzuke province. After recounting his adventures and all he had done Kyusuke begged Gonzaemon to re-engage him on the same terms as before. Gonzaemon was both surprised and pleased. The praiseworthy actions of Kyusuke so moved the good-natured village headman that he proposed to set the young man up as one of his branch families. Kyusuke's modesty was by no means eager to accept such an honour, but seeing it was really the wish of his patron he at length yielded. I need not tell you how industriously he attended to all his duties that he might prove no discredit to his master's judgment. His family thrives in Tama-mura to this day. As for the sword which he got from his robber brother, it was purchased by Lord Matsudaira, Daimiyo of Awa province. He named it "Sute-maru" (a foundling) in reference to its history, and treasured it highly. And it is still a valued heirloom in the family.

THE HEROISM OF TORII KATSUTAKA

From "Tales of the Samurai"

The little garrison besieged in the Castle of Nagashino, in the province of Mikawa, was in desperate straits.

Okudaira Sadayoshi, Governor of the castle, was away at a distance on business of importance, and his son, Sadamasa, was left in command with a small company of but eight hundred men. These fought with the courage of despair; but having been taken unawares, the castle was ill provided with ammunition and provisions, and at the end of a fortnight death, from starvation, or the alternative of surrender, stared them in the face.

It was at the close of April in the third year of Tensho (1575). Takeda Katsuyori, Lord of Kai, knowing his feudal enemy, Sadayoshi, to be absent, deemed it a good opportunity to attack his stronghold; and, therefore, at the head of 28,000, suddenly swooped down and surrounded the castle. Stationing his headquarters on a hill opposite the main entrance, he invested it on all sides, day and night continuing the assaults on the walls, so that, if possible, it might fall into his hands before either Sada-

yoshi's liege lord, Tokugawa Iyeyasu, or the latter's powerful ally, Oda Nobunaga, could come to the rescue.

By the end of two weeks some three hundred of the defenders had been killed, or so seriously wounded as to be incapable of rendering further aid; and sparing though they had been of it, food remained for barely two days more. In this sore strait Sadamasa summoned all his men and with calm courage and determination addressed them as follows:—

"My men," he said, "I cannot speak too highly of your bravery and devotion, and I thank you. But the odds against us are too great and the castle must be given up. Our ammunition has almost run out and we have food for but two days more. To send for help is impossible, so closely does the enemy watch every outlet. I will send an envoy to Takeda requesting that you may all depart unmolested, while I myself will commit *seppuku*. It may be in your hearts to fight to the end rather than surrender the castle, but of what avail would it be for you thus to sacrifice your lives. It would do no good to me nor to anyone else. It is my wish that you should all live to join my father and hereafter fight again for him and it may be recover the castle that we are now forced by wholly unforseen and unavoidable circumstances to yield. There is nothing else to be done. Save yourselves and allow me to commit *seppuku*."

Sadamasa ceased speaking, but before the sound of his grave tones had died away, a ringing voice from the rear took up his words.

"Commit *seppuku*, my lord! It is too soon to talk of such a desperate measure! With your permission I will steal my way through the enemy's lines and summon reinforcements before it is too late."

"Is it Katsutaka who speaks? My brave fellow, I appreciate your desire, but the idea is quite impracticable. How could a rat, much less a giant like you over six feet, get through the enemy's lines unobserved, and supposing such a miracle accomplished, how could an army reach us in time to avert our dying from starvation? It is not without deep consideration that I have come to the conclusion that I have just made known to you. Your project is impossible."

"Not so, my lord," Katsutaka spoke quietly like a man who has fully made up his mind and knows what he is about. "As you know, I am a good swimmer, and I am strong. I will cross the river in the dark and hurrying at utmost speed to His Excellency Lord Tokugawa lay before him our need and request the instant despatch of troops to disperse the besiegers. I have thought the matter over; I can do it."

"Bravely conceived and bravely spoken, Katsutaka! Well, desperate diseases call for desperate remedies. You can but fail and we shall be no worse off than before. Go, my friend, and may luck attend you!" He paused, for emotion made it difficult to speak; then recovering his voice, he went on:—"Should you effect your escape, as you hope, it is necessary that we should know of it that we may hold out to the last minute. How can you inform us of the fact!"

"Easily, my lord. I will climb to the summit of

Mt. Funatsuki and cause smoke to rise by way of a signal. From thence to Okazaki where Lord Tokugawa is in residence is a distance of only twenty-three miles or so. I shall arrive at his castle by noon tomorrow, and having delivered my message shall return without delay."

"And how can you tell us of the coming of reinforcements?"

"At midnight, the day after tomorrow, I shall be back on the mountain and again I will signal to you by smoke. One column of smoke will mean that His Excellency Lord Tokugawa's troops are coming alone; two will mean that they are accompanied by those of Lord Oda; and three will signify that His Excellency's army has been joined by both Lords Oda,—an allied army of three divisions."

"Can you by any possibility inform us of the number of troops?"

"Nothing easier, my lord. One shot will tell you that 10,000 troops are on their way; two shots, 20,000; three shots 30,000. Have no fears, my lord. I am confident that I shall succeed."

"Heaven aid your heroic spirit, Katsutaka! When do your propose to start?"

"With your permission, as soon as it is dark, my lord. There is no time to be lost. Farewell!"

"Stay, my friend. I will give you something before you go. See here."

Katsutaka approached nearer and his master gave into his hands a case of costly incense and a valuable sword.

"This incense is a family treasure, having been handed down from our ancestor, Prince Tomohira, the seventh son of the Emperor Murakami; and this sword is another heirloom—a noted blade by Sadamune. Take these articles as some small recognition of your bravery and loyalty."

With deep reverence the soldier received the precious gifts.

"Your lordship is too good to his humble servant. I accept your generosity with profound gratitude."

"Stay yet again, Katsutaka! I must pledge you in a parting cup."

Two cups were brought and a bottle of *saké*. Katsutaka then executed a war-dance singing a martial strain the while. Then he departed to make the few preparations necessary for his perilous undertaking, leaving all those assembled, both officers and men, full of admiration for his heroism.

Clad in the lightest attire and with a small packet wrapped in waterproof oil-paper in his hand, in the stillness of night, Katsutaka stole out of a postern gate and crept to the bank of the River Iwashiro which flowed at no great distance past the castle. The rainy season having already set in, the stream was much swollen and the swift current in its windings dashed furiously against either bank in turn. Katsutaka hid himself among the tall reeds growing on the edge and cast a searching eye in every direction. The full moon, breaking out of a heavy bank of clouds, made the night almost as bright as day; and to his dismay the adventurer saw that a web of

large and small ropes to which were fastened innumerable clappers was extended over the stream, and that a close line of sentinels was on guard on the opposite shore. When anything happened to touch the ropes the clappers would rattle loudly "gara-gara, gara-gara," and at each rattle the sentinels were on the alert with torches to discover the cause of the noise.

At this unexpected difficulty Katsutaka was greatly taken aback. How could he swim across the river in the face of such vigilant precautions? To add to his dismay he saw waving lazily in the gentle night breeze an *umajirushi* or "horse-badge" and a flag, both bearing a coat of arms that he knew belonged to Baba Nobufusa who was esteemed the ablest of all the veteran generals of the opposing army.

"I am certainly under an unlucky star," groaned Katsutaka. "With Baba Nobufusa in charge of this side it is well-nigh impossible for me to cross the river and effect a landing. But I will not give up without doing my best, and it may be I shall yet find a way to elude their vigilance."

He tore up a reed and was about to hurl it into the river when it struck him that if the root had earth on it the sagacious Nobufusa would conclude that some one was hiding in the vicinity and order his soldiers to make a strict search. That would be fatal to his enterprise. He, therefore, washed the mud off the reed and then threw it into the stream. Immediately it got entangled in the network of ropes and set all

the clappers clattering loudly, "gara-gara, gara-gara."

On the instant two sentinels leapt into the water and drew the reed to land. It was taken to Nobufusa who carefully examined the root by the light of a torch.

"There is nothing suspicious about this reed," said the general. "It is of no consequence."

Katsutaka, peering intently from his hiding place on the other side, felt his heart sink.

"It is hopeless to think of crossing," he said to himself.

After a few moments of despondency he once more uprooted a reed and washing off the mud as before cast it into the river. Again the clappers were set a-going and again some of the men plunged into the water to seek the cause.

"Another reed, my lord," said the man who handed it to the general.

"The reeds are being washed off the bank by the flood," he remarked after examining the reed. "It is nothing; but nevertheless do not relax your vigilance, my men."

Katsutaka now picked up a dead branch that had been washed ashore, and threw it at the ropes, and after that another reed. So he went on, throwing now one thing, now another, keeping the clappers rattling so unintermittingly that in time Nobufusa's soldiers ceased to take notice of the sound and no longer dashed into the river at every fresh repetition. Still, however, Katsutaka could not venture to enter

the river himself, for watchful eyes never left off scanning the dark waters. Time was passing. What could he do? Katsutaka was well-nigh in despair. To return and confess he had failed at the very outset was insupportable—unthinkable even!

Just then he heard the roll of a drum—the guard was being relieved. Nobufusa's men retired and Atobe Oinosuke's took their place.

Katsutaka's spirits rose. Oinosuke was noted for his subtlety, he knew, but could not be compared with Nobufusa in patient strategy. Once more Katsutaka began throwing things into the river, but the fresh sentinels were very much on the alert and examined everything that set the clappers rattling. Poor Katsutaka was feeling indeed hopeless when the heavy clouds that had been coming up unobserved, obscured the moon and there was a low rumble of thunder in the distance. Then with appalling swiftness the storm was upon them. The noise was terrific. The heavy rush of rain that came down in sheets, the roar of the wind and the roll and rattle of thunder made a pandemonium of the erstwhile peaceful night.

Katsutaka had no fear of the elements; he only thought that now his course was clear. He danced and shouted for joy, knowing that he could be neither seen nor heard through the tumult and pitchy darkness. But no time was to be lost. The storm might pass over as rapidly as it had come. Stripping himself bare and tying his oil-paper package round his neck he slipped into the turbid waters

and with his dagger cut some of the ropes that crossed it. The noisy clappers sounded faintly to the watchers on the opposite bank, but as some men were about to investigate their general stopped them.

"It is unnecessary, my men," he said. "The clappers are moved by fish coming down the flood from the upper reaches of the river. None of the garrison opposite would be so mad as to attempt to cross in such a storm—it would mean instant death. Therefore be reassured."

"You speak truly, my lord," assented one of the men. "It can only be fish as your honour says."

Tossed and whirled about by the current, Katsutaka struggled to the opposite bank at a point about half a mile from where he had started. He found this part also well guarded, but hoped that under cover of the darkness and noise he might get through. Stealthily he was making his way when suddenly his foot slipped on the wet ground and he fell with a slight thud.

"Who goes there?" rang out the quick challenge in his ear.

Startled, Katsutaka scrambled to his feet and laid his hand on the hilt of his dagger.

"One of the patrol, sir," he answered readily.

"Is that all? I pity you out in the storm. Pass on!"

"Thank you, captain. Good-night, sir."

"Good-night. Do not relax your care. The enemy may take advantage of the storm."

"I will take care, sir."

Thus his presence of mind saved the situation when all seemed lost, and the first and most difficult part of his enterprise was accomplished.

By the time Katsutaka had ascended to the summit of the mountain from whence he intended to signal, the rain had almost ceased and the rumble of thunder was barely audible in the growing distance. As he paused to take breath the moon shone out again and bathed the landscape in silvery loveliness. With material brought in his little package he managed to make a small blaze, trusting it would be seen by the watchers at the castle who would be anxious to know of his escape. Then once more resuming his journey he hastened down the declivity and with no further adventure arrived at the town of Okazaki about 10 o'clock the following morning.

As he drew near the castle he met an officer on horseback attended by a few men on foot. To his great joy he recognized his own chief, Lord Okudaira Sadayoshi. Placing himself in the way and bowing with due reverence,

"I am Torii Katsutaka, my lord," he said, "and I have come on an urgent errand from your honourable son at present beleaguered in the Castle of Nagashino."

"Beleaguered! My son beleaguered! What mean you by such strange tidings? Follow me; I will return to the castle instantly."

Turning his horse and followed closely by his retinue and Katsutaka, Sadayoshi cantered quickly back the way he had come and dismounting in the

courtyard demanded of the messenger a more explicit and detailed account of how matters stood. He was indignant beyond measure at what he heard.

"This is wholly unexpected and unwelcome news," he exclaimed. "My brave fellow, your daring deed is beyond all praise. I came here two days ago with Lord Tokugawa, on my way home intending to stay a short time. Now I must proceed instantly. Wait here while I go to tell His Excellency; it may be he will wish to question you himself."

In a very short time an attendant summoned Katsutaka to the presence of the famous statesman.

"Torii Katsutaka," said he kindly, "you are a brave man, and have done a wonderful thing. Let me know exactly how matters stand at the Castle of Nagashino. You have my permission to speak to me directly."

Expressing his sense of the honour shown him, Katsutaka, in the simple words of a plain soldier, gave a detailed account of the state of affairs within and without the castle when he had left it.

"If reinforcements be not instantly despatched, Your Excellency," he concluded, "the garrison will starve to death. I entreat, Your Excellency, let no time be lost."

"Reinforcements shall be sent with all possible speed," said Iyeyasu. "By a happy chance both Lords Oda are now in this province with their troops, and they can reach the besieged castle in two, or at the most, three days. But for you we should have known nothing till too late. You are a hero indeed.

Now go and get food and rest before you start on your return journey."

That afternoon of the same day, Iyeyasu, at the head of 20,000 men proceeded to the castle of Ushikubo, where he was joined by the two Lords Oda with their combined forces of 50,000 men. Arrangements were set on foot for an early start the next morning.

Iyeyasu then spoke to Katsutaka again:—

"As you see, our allied armies will be able to reach Nagashino in two days at the latest. So rest assured that the relief will be in time. You must be greatly fatigued. Remain here a few days till you are fully rested."

"Your Excellency is too considerate, but I cannot take advantage of your kindness. I must return at once and tell the garrison of the success of my mission and that help is coming. Allow me to set out without delay."

"By your own showing it would be quite impossible for you to re-enter the castle in the manner in which you came out. Do not be rash, but stay here as I advise you."

"A thousand pardons, Your Excellency," said Katsutaka, respectfully, but firmly. "At the risk of my life I undertook this errand; I will carry it through to the end. It is an honour more than my poor life is worth to have been granted speech with Your Excellency and favoured with words of commendation from your august lips. Life can offer me no higher grace. Even should I be captured by the enemy and put to an ignominious death I should

have nothing to regret. The garrison is starving; to know that help is on the way will give them new life. Permit me to go, Your Excellency."

"If you are so set upon it," replied Lord Tokugawa, "I will say no more. You shall take a letter from me to Sadamasa."

"That would be dangerous, Your Excellency. If the letter were found on my person notice would be given of your approach and the enemy would take steps accordingly."

"Right," said Iyeyasu with a smile. "You are wise as well as brave, my Katsutaka!"

Then Katsutaka bade farewell to Lord Tokugawa and Lord Okudaira Sadayoshi, and shouldering his gun set out once more on his perilous journey.

Anxiously did the diminishing and weakened garrison at the besieged castle wait for the signal that should tell them help was coming. Cheered by the knowledge that Katsutaka, contrary to expectation, had succeeded in eluding the sentinels they now had some hope that he would have the same good fortune in his further quest. In turn watchmen went up to the high tower and strained their eyes in the direction whence the promised signal would appear. At midnight of the second day, to their boundless joy, they descried a light as of a bonfire on Mt. Funatsuki; and soon three columns of dark smoke rose in the still air plainly seen against the sky that was lighted up by a great round moon. Help was coming! But would it be sufficient? How many troops were on their way? Hark! a sharp report, and then another

and yet another till seven shots gave the glad assurance of the approach of 70,000 men. The starving men took heart again, and forgetting hunger and wounds looked forward with joy to their speedy relief.

But the sound of the shots reached other ears as well as those for which it was intended. The company on guard at the foot of the mountain heard it too, and a detachment went up to investigate. General Naito Masatoyo himself led the little band. With no thought of danger Katsutaka, triumphant, was gaily running down when he found himself surrounded by the very men he wished to avoid.

"Halt! Who are you?" demanded the general.

Katsutaka's ready wit did not desert him.

"Hearing shots, I have been with my comrades to find out what they meant. We have searched everywhere but can find no one. I am coming down to report our failure."

"Come nearer and let me see your face. Who is your captain?"

"I belong to the company of riflemen under the command of Captain Anayama."

"Your name!"

"My name—my name is . . ."

"Men, take this fellow prisoner."

More easily said than done. At the command four or five soldiers sprang forward to obey, but Katsutaka made such a vigorous defence that they found it impossible to hold him; and freeing himself from their grasp he ran down towards the foot of the

hill. More soldiers were coming up, however, so he turned back, hoping under cover of some bushes to slip past and thus escape. But he was seen and caught as in a trap. Dealing heavy blows right and left he made a good fight, but the odds were too overwhelming and he was at last forced to yield. His gun was taken from him and handed to the general who found thereon an inscription in red lacquer, "One of 3,000 guns belonging to the Castle of Okazaki."

The truth flashed upon him. He guessed that the man they had captured had been to Okazaki to ask for reinforcements. Late though it was he must be taken before the Commander-in-chief, General Katsuyori, at once.

Bloodstained and travel-worn Katsutaka presented a pitiable sight when, roused from his slumbers, the general surveyed him by the imperfect light of a lantern. Yet there was something in the bearing of the man that called forth a feeling of admiration for his courage rather than compassion for his condition and circumstances.

"Your name?" said the general.

Having no motive now for concealment Katsutaka spoke out boldly.

"Torii Katsutaka, retainer of Lord Okudaira Sadamasa, Governor of the Castle of Nagashino."

"You have been to Okazaki, for reinforcements, and fired those shots from the top of Mt. Funatsuki by a prearranged plan. Is it not so?"

"It is so, Your Excellency."

"It was a hazardous errand. You must tell me later how you managed to creep through our lines. I know how to appreciate and reward bravery, and would like to number you among my men. If you will come over to us I will give you a yearly stipend of 1,000 koku[1] of rice. If you refuse you die."

Pretending to be pleased with the offer Katsutaka accepted it with many expressions of gratitude. He was thinking that by doing this he might put his captors off their guard and be able to escape, or in some way render a service to those shut up in the castle.

"You do me too much honour, Your Excellency," he said. "I am but a humble private but I will use all diligence to serve you faithfully."

"I am glad you are troubled by no foolish scruples as to desertion," said the general, who nevertheless was somewhat surprised at the ready acceptance of his propsoal. "There is something I desire you to do at once to prove your sincerity."

In a low voice General Katsuyori gave an order to an aide-de-camp, who retired and after a little time came back with a written paper which he handed to his chief. It purported to be a letter from Sadayoshi to his son, informing him that, on account of a sudden outbreak of insurrection, Lord Tokugawa was unable to despatch troops to the relief of the Castle of Nagashino and that there was nothing to be done but to

[1] A koku is about four bushels; in feudal days it was customary to pay the samurai in rice.

give it up on the best terms available. The letter was a skilful imitation of Sadayoshi's hand, for it had been written by an officer who had once served under him and who was well acquainted with his style.

Showing the forgery to Katsutaka with no little pride, Katsuyori said:—

"Now, my man, you must write another letter to confirm the intelligence contained in this one, and both letters shall be at once shot over the walls. What! do you hesitate?"

Seeing no course open to him but to obey, Katsutaka did as required. The two missives were then fastened to an arrow and shot into the castle by a skilled archer.

The consternation and disappointment of the expectant garrison can be better imagined than described. All the more bitter was this news from the hope that had preceded it. Strong men wept.

But Okudaira Jiyemon, chief Councillor, having closely examined the letters, burst out laughing.

"It is hardly an occasion for mirth, Jiyemon," said Sadamasa, much displeased at this untimely merriment.

"May I inquire the nature of the joke?"

"Ha, ha, ha! I beg your lordship's pardon, but Katsuyori is a dull fellow to imagine we could be taken in so easily. Be so good as to look at this paper—it is not the kind manufactured in this province such as our lord always uses, but in theirs.

That one fact gives them away. Never fear, my lord! Take my word for it, Katsutaka's signals told the truth. This is but a plot to deceive us into surrendering before help comes."

It was now plain to all that the letters were not genuine and their spirits again rose. Going up to the high tower Sadamasa called so that the sentinels on the other side could hear him.

"Soldiers of Kai, approach! I have something to say in answer to the letters sent me but now. Request an officer to come near enough to hear my words."

Nothing doubting but that Sadamasa wished to make terms of surrender, Katsuyori himself came forth, attended by his suite.

"Accept my best thanks for your arrow-letters," began Sadamasa politely. "It was good of you to pass on my father's communication and I am much obliged to you. Then suddenly changing his tone, "Do you think," he thundered, "that such a clumsy trick could deceive us or induce me to give up the stronghold of my ancestors? Fools! The laugh is on our side! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the men behind him greatly enjoying the discomfiture of the men below.

Katsuyori was furious.

"Go, Katsutaka," he shouted. "Go to the edge of the moat and tell them that no reinforcements are coming—that they must surrender!"

Guarded by two men, for he had not yet been set at liberty, Katsutaka stepped forward to the edge of

the moat, and raising his voice so that every word rang clear and distinct,

"Listen, my lord, and comrades," he said. "What I tell you is the truth. Lord Tokugawa and the two Lords Oda, with an allied army of 70,000 men are hastening to your rescue. They will be here to-morrow without fail. The arrow-letters are utterly false. Rest assured!"

So wholly unexpected was this bold speech that no one thought of stopping it till the mischief was done. As a mighty cheer went up from the besieged, however, the infuriated soldiers of the investing army seized Katsutaka and in mad fury kicked and cuffed him mercilessly. Then at Katsuyori's command they crucified him just opposite the main gate of the castle he had given his life to save.

Early the next morning the allied forces came and the Kai army being utterly routed, the siege was raised.

HOW TO MEET DEATH

From the Osaka Mainichi

March 16, 1920, the snow lay deep over the Siberian town of Nicolaievsk. The Bolshiviki invaders had mastered the town. The military guard of the Japanese Consulate, as well as all the soldiers and marines, had been killed to the last man.

Realizing the terrible and hopeless situation, Consul Ishida ordered his wife, Tazue-ko, aged thirty, to don formal clothing, and to dress the children, Ayako, aged eight, and Torao, aged two, similarly. The Consul assumed his official ceremonial uniform, and when all were fully dressed in clothes bearing the family crest, they bowed reverently in the direction of the Imperial Palace in distant Tokyo. Madame Ishida knew intuitively the fate that was in store for herself and children; and the set, determined expression on her husband's face steeled her for the end. She sat graciously before her husband, held her beloved son, Torao, on her knee, and her daughter Ayako, at his side.

The Consul, with tear bedimmed eyes, addressed his son, and asked: "Omaye wa hyakusho ni naritaika?"—Do you wish to bear yourself as a farmer?

The child was watching his father's face attentively, when the parent said: "Dewa gunjin ni naruka?"—Will you then bear yourself as a soldier? Torao nodded assent with innocent seriousness. The Consul then looked at his wife, smiling, and the whole family embraced. Farewell saké was drunk from cups bearing the family crest. Suddenly were heard pistol reports—one, two, three, and—the Consul, holding a revolver in his right hand, trembling, went into an adjoining room where was Lieutenant-Commander Shingo Miyake, I.J.N. These two took their last drink of Samura Masamune, and they manfully met their end by each other's hands. At this time the Consulate building was in flames, into which they threw themselves, with faint cries of Banzai.

THE TRUE STORY OF HIDARI JINGORO

Translated by H. J. Ishii Black

From the Tokio *Far East*

Hidari Jingoro, the famous carpenter and sculptor, was born about three hundred years ago of humble parents at Hida, in the Japanese Alps. At the age of fourteen he ran away from home, and with great difficulty made his way to Osaka, when he became an apprentice of a master carpenter. The butt and laughing stock of his companions, in his youth he is said to have been both slow and stupid.

Many stories are told about this celebrated workman, few of which, however, have any foundation in fact.

That he lost the use of his right hand during a dispute which ended in a fight at the building of the famous Yomei Gate at Nikko, is certainly an invention, he having been known as Hidari—Left-handed —Jingoro long before that time.

Jingoro was an eccentric, dissipated man, working only by fits and starts as the humour pleased him, so though the most famous artisan in the annals of

Japan, he never rose to be a master contractor or builder, always working under some head man.

That he was restless, never content to remain long in one place, is proved by the fact, that work attributed to him is found all over the country, not only in the principal cities, but even in little out-of-the-way towns, to which access in his day was only to be gained by long and often dangerous journeys on foot.

Jingoro was proud of his art, and would often do very unnecessary things to show off his skill.

In Akita there is a gate built by him. An ordinary temple-gate, with nothing particular about it. Uncarved, it is severely simple of form. At first glance, it might have been erected by any unskilled builder, but on examination it will be found that one of the square posts has been purposely cut in two and then rejoined in a most wonderful manner. None can tell how the joining has been effected. It seems simply impossible that the pieces should have been fitted together as they are. During the generations that have passed since this post was made it has been inspected by innumerable skilled workmen, but though many attempts have been made to imitate it they have all ended in failure.

Although Jingoro received very large sums for some of his work, all his earnings were wasted, chiefly in drink. While the money lasted he was seldom sober and he rarely settled down again to work till his pockets were quite empty.

One evening towards dusk Jingoro was passing

along Bakuro-cho (Horsedealer Street), in the Nihonbashi district of Yedo. He had spent his last cash, and though he felt a great longing for a hot cup of saké, he knew not how to obtain one.

Oh! how he wished for a drink!

Suddenly he noticed a large eating and drinking shop, which he would have to pass.

"Ah!" thought Jingoro, "I shall never be able to resist the temptation to enter. I will close my eyes, so that I shall not see the people enjoying themselves, and hold my nose to prevent me from scenting the delicious smell of the saké."

Suiting the action to the thought, he at once closed his eyes, and with hand on nose, was hastening past the place when he stumbled against a waiter who was watering the road in front of the entrance. This caused him to open his eyes and let go his nose. Sight and smell were irresistible forces of compulsion. Regardless of everything save his desire for drink, the carpenter entered the building.

An Isakaya—low-class eating and drinking shop—in those days, and in fact till quite recent years, was generally dark, uncomfortable and dirty. The food of the coarsest and the saké of the poorest.

Part of the place Jingoro entered was raised and matted, but the principal part for the convenience of such of the guests as were barefooted or wore sandals, had a hard-beaten earthen floor with two long tables of rough boards, on either side of which were small empty soy tubs to be used as seats.

Seating himself on one of these Jingoro called out:—

"Hai! banshu!" (vulgar for waiter).

"Hei! Hei! What shall I bring, sir?"

"Give me a dish of raw fish, and hot saké—and look sharp!"

"All right, sir! Shall I heat one or two go?"

"One or two go!" retorted Jingoro. "What do you take me for? Do you think I am an apprentice in my teens! Bring me five go and mind I don't want a saké cup, such as can scarcely be seen through spectacles; bring me a rice cup and see that it is a large one!"

The astonished serving man hurried away and soon returned with the things ordered.

"Ah!" muttered Jingoro to himself, "In for a penny in for a pound! I'll drink my fill, there's certain to be a row. What does it matter whether the amount be small or large!"

The saké was soon gone, more and more ordered. Jingoro began to feel drowsy; he would like to lie down and have a sleep. This he could not do seated as he was on an uncomfortable little tub. Well, he would go home to his master's. Yes, that would be best. Clapping his hands he summoned the waiter.

"Banshu!" said he. "I haven't any money on me now, but I'll call in tomorrow or next day and settle."

"Please do not joke, sir!" replied the man. "I am responsible for what I have served you."

"And you want payment now! Do you?" interrupted the carpenter. "Well then you can't have it. I can't give you what I haven't got."

"We never give credit, even to our oldest customers who come in every day. I must ask you to settle at once."

"I tell you I can't. You might shake me upside down, there is not a cash to fall out."

"If you have no money, why did you enter?" demanded the man, beginning to lose patience.

"Well," retorted the drunkard. "That was your fault. I shut my eyes and held my nose so that I should not be tempted to enter, when you rudely stumbled against me!"

"Excuse me, sir. It was you who struck against me!"

"'Tis false! but even if it was so, what business had you outside blocking up the way?"

"I was watering the street."

"I don't care what you were doing! You fool! If you had not been in the way, we should not have knocked against each other, and I should not have opened my eyes and been enticed to come in. There, you see, it is all your fault. You must lend me the money until I can call and pay you."

"You knew that you could not pay, and still you drank more than any other ten men! Ma!" shouted the now angry man, "I will not let you leave without payment!"

"You won't let me leave!" exclaimed Jingoro with a laugh. "I should like to see you prevent me! Do you know who I am?"

"I don't care who you are. If you haven't any money you must leave something as a pledge."

"Can't leave what I haven't got. Blue leggins—ditto vest, carpenter's coat and sash, nothing else. Can't leave you any of these. Why, I should not be able to walk along the street!"

"What is that bundle, sir? Leave that and to save trouble I will allow you to depart."

"Many thanks! you can't have this. What do you think it contains? Look!" thundered Jingoro, undoing the cloth. "These are my cherished tools, more precious to me than his sword to a samurai. I would not part with these even for a day to save my life. But look here, give me a piece of wood and I will carve you something which shall be worth much more than the trifle I owe you. Here bring me another drink with something to go with it."

"What! more saké!" gasped the serving man.

"Yes, the effects of what I drank are beginning to wear off. I never can work unless I am either sober or drunk. A man is always at his worst when he is neither the one nor the other."

Not liking either to consent or refuse, the waiter consulted his master, who was seated at the counter.

"Well," replied he, "it's a bad precedent to allow anyone to leave without paying. If you do so to one, another will certainly expect to be able to do the same. You say the man says that he will carve something and leave it as a pledge. Well, it's no use having a row. The disturbance is already interfering with the other guests. I don't suppose his carving will be of any value, but give him a piece of wood,

a sho of saké with some relish, and tell him to do his best."

Taking a long draught of the newly brought saké, Jingoro set to work. He was always at his best when in his cups. At such times he seemed to be inspired.

In a surprisingly short time the carving was finished. Out of the rough wood the carpenter had fashioned a crab, with its eight legs and two formidable looking claws.

Inspecting it closely he muttered, "I have never done anything better than this. Here banto, take this to your master and tell him I will call in a day or two to pay what I owe. Be careful that the legs or claws are not broken. I shall be angry if it is injured."

Saying which, Jingoro got up with a yawn, stretched himself, and rolled drunkenly out of the place.

The evening was growing late, when one of the guests inquired of the waiter what the curious looking thing on the money box on the counter was.

"That, sir," he replied, "Oh! it's a carving made by a drunken fellow, who not having money to pay his bill, made it and left it as a pledge."

"But, banto, it's alive? Look! It's moving!"

"You must be mistaken, sir. It's only a rough carving of a crab."

But how was it! As he followed the guest's gaze he saw that the creature was indeed moving. Rushing to his master, he exclaimed, "Look! Master!

Look! The crab is bewitched! It is alive! It is moving!"

It was indeed so. Directly any cash were placed on the money box the crab seized them one by one and slowly dropped them through the slit in the lid.

The report of the wood carving that moved quickly spread, and the place was soon crowded to excess with people eager to behold the wonder. In a short time all eatables and drinkables were sold out.

Next day the crash was even greater than the previous evening. Zeiimon, the proprietor, felt that his fortune was made. He was sure that the drunken fellow who had made the carving would never return for it, but if he did?—Well! he would give him some more saké to drink and perhaps a small sum of money. Anyway, he would persuade him to give him the crab.

Days passed. Zeiimon had changed the name of the house from Zeniya to Kagiya—the Crab. More and more people came each day to see the wonderful carving. Certainly this good fortune must be a favour from the Gods. So reasoned the astute Zeiimon.

One morning, as the proprietor was seated in an upper room counting over his profits, the waiter rushed upstairs, crying:

"Master! Master! He has come!"

"Come! Who?"

"The man who made the carving. He has ordered some saké, and told me to bring him the crab."

"Invite him to come up here. Be very polite and then hurry round to the restaurant in the next street and order some of their best, as soon as possible; also get two or three sho of the best saké."

Jingoro, nothing loth, accepted the invitation, and was received with great ceremony, a silken cushion being placed for him. Tea and cakes were followed by many dainties cooked in the best style, with plenty of the finest saké of which he was pressed to partake without reserve. While Zeiimon all politeness apologizing for the waiter's rudeness of the other evening, requested that he would have the kindness to give him the carving as a remembrance of their meeting, which he felt sure was not brought about by chance, but had most likely some connection with their former existence.

Jingoro ate and drank to his fill, but turning a deaf ear to all flattery sternly refused to part with the crab.

"No," said he, "I can not agree to give it to you. I was inspired when I carved it, and have cut my very spirit into the wood. It is the best thing that I have ever done. If you want it, I will sell it to you. My price is one hundred ryo (yen)."

"One hundred ryo!" gasped Zeiimon.

"Yes, I never bargain. Return me the crab or give me the money."

Argument was useless. Jingoro was adamant, and at last Zeiimon had to hand him a packet of one hundred golden koban.

. . . . . .

Until quite recently, when the building was removed to make room for street improvements, the Kagiya in Bakuro-cho was one of the old Yedo Meisho—celebrated places—and upon the counter, though it had lost its magic power of motion, was to be seen a rough carving of a crab, which was certainly the authentic work of the great sculptor.

THE WRESTLING OF A DAIMIO

From "Tales of the Samurai"

In the second month of the fifteenth year of Tensho (A.D. 1587), Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who had brought the greater part of Japan under his sway, crossed over to the Island of Kyushu with a large army, in order to subjugate Shimazu Yoshihisa, an independent daimio governing eight of the nine provinces that form the island. The following month Gamo Uyisato, a renowned general in Hideyoshi's army, advanced to the Castle of Ganshaku in the province of Buzen, and attacked it fiercely for three successive days. The garrison, however, offered such a stubborn resistance that little impression was made; and it seemed unlikely that the fortress would fall into the hands of the besiegers for some time. Ujisato being a man of impetuous and fiery disposition, lost all patience, and rated his men soundly.

"Cowards!" he shouted. "How is it you are so long in taking such an insignificant place? Have you all turned women? I will take the castle single-handed!"

He dashed to the front, spurring his steed reck-

lessly forward in the very teeth of a volley of arrows and bullets that was directed at him. But as he neared the ramparts a shot struck his horse in the abdomen causing it, with a scream of agony, to rear itself up on its hind legs and throw its rider backwards off the saddle. At the instant, the gate of the castle was flung open, and a number of men rushed out. The fallen warrior encompassed by the foe thought his end had come, when a giant clad in black armour and mounted on a great chestnut horse dashed to the rescue. With mighty strokes he cut and hewed right and left, scattering the enemy like leaves before the wind of autumn. Some fell dead beneath the hoofs of his horse, others took to their heels and regained the shelter of the walls. Nishimura Gonshiro did not trouble himself to follow the fugitives, but leaping from his charger hastened to raise his chief. Ujisato was but slightly wounded and with Gonshiro's help was able to mount the latter's horse.

"A thousand thanks, my gallant fellow," he said, gathering up the reins. "But for you I should by this time have been a dead man. I shall never forget you have saved my life this day, and it will be my great pleasure after the war to express my gratitude in some tangible form."

The example of Gonshiro's heroic deed seemed to put new spirit into Ujisato's men, and with great determination and bravery they stormed the castle. As a result in the course of a few hours the garrison was obliged to surrender, and before many days had

elapsed all Kyushu had submitted to Hideyoshi's rule.

When quiet was restored Hideyoshi bestowed rewards on all the daimios who had fought for him, and Ujisato was promoted to the Governorship of Matsuzaka Castle in the province of Ise with an annual income of 300,000 koku of rice.

All in their turns, and according to their degrees, Ujisato rewarded those of his vassals who had distinguished themselves under his leadership. Some were given handsome gifts; others had their stipends raised. Gonshiro who considered he had done a greater deed than any of the others, seeing that he had saved his master's life at the risk of his own, naturally expected to receive some special favour. But greatly to his surprise and chagrin no acknowledgment was made. What could be the reason?

At first he felt no little resentment and brooded over this neglect. But after a time, being a man who cared little for gain, he let the affair fade from his mind though he still felt sore when he happened to think of it.

Meanwhile the summer had come and gone, and now the 15th of September was here. The night of all the year on which the atmosphere in Japan is most translucent and the moon shines with the greatest brilliancy. The night when men of a poetic turn sit up into the small hours composing verses on the beauty of the scene, the while they sip saké from delicate porcelain cups to aid the fickle muse. On this night therefore Ujisato gave a "moon-viewing

party," inviting a large number of his retainers to a banquet in the main hall of his castle.

The witching light of the full moon wrapt the stern old pile; the tiny ripples on the moat glistened like liquid gold; the crickets shrilled musically among the tall grasses. The sliding screens had been removed and the calm beauty without softened and impressed the hearts of the sturdy warriors inured to scenes so different, of bloodshed and the din of battle. Now it was that charmed by the loveliness around them many began to compose verses in adoration of the scene, and Ujisato's were among the best. But after a time the saké of which they partook, not sparingly, went to their heads, and it is not surprising that some of the would-be poets became a little elevated. The talk turned to tales of war and one and another recounted deeds of prowess performed by himself in the face of danger and difficulty. Nor was the host, Lord Ujisato himself, above a little boasting in his cups and it was thus he spoke:—

"Listen, my friends," he began. "Do you remember the fierce assault of the Castle of Ganshaku at the beginning of this year? The mere mention of it makes my blood boil! We attacked the castle three days without a break yet could make no headway. You men lost heart. To rouse you to a final effort I rode up to the gate alone—alone, in the face of the enemy amid a perfect hailstorm of missiles. A bullet struck my horse and he fell—I under him. Seizing the opportunity the enemy poured out and surrounded me nine or ten deep—I determined to

sell my life dear" . . . here the narrator paused to wipe his face from which the perspiration was streaming from the energy with which he spoke. Gonshiro's heart leapt, he bent forward his face eager —now, at last his lord was about to reward his patient waiting and acknowledge his service before all men.

"To sell my life dear," repeated Ujisato with gleaming eyes. "So I fought as I had never done before with the courage of despair. Some I cut down, others I put to flight, finally I succeeded in remounting my horse and rode into the castle before the enemy could close the gates against me. Seeing my intrepid action you were inspired by my spirit, and following closely on my heels, you all did your best and the fortress was taken."

Thus did Ujisato omit all mention of Gonshiro and overlook his gallant deed. This base ingratitude was more than the faithful retainer could bear!

"Gonshiro begs permission to speak a word, your lordship," he said brusquely.

"By all means," assented Ujisato. "What is it?"

"Forgive me, your lordship, but what you said just now is hardly correct."

"What! You imply I spoke an untruth!"

"Yes, your lordship. You talk as if you had ridden into the castle unaided. That is not true. When you fell from your horse and were surrounded by the enemy's men I hastened to your rescue and it was my horse on which I assisted you to mount. By my timely help you were enabled to ride into the castle. It is but bare justice that you should amend

your statement and acknowledge that you were saved from certain death by Gonshiro, your lordship."

This bold speech caused no little stir amongst the guests. Many of those present could bear witness to the truth of the rough soldier's words. They waited with bated breath for what would follow.

Ujisato was moved to make a frank avowal. It had long been in his mind to requite Gonshiro's great service by a suitable reward, and it was his intention to appoint him governor of the castle of Tage which was a small fortress attached to the large castle of Matsuzaka where he himself resided. But Tage Castle occupied a naturally strong site and stood in relation to the greater castle in such a situation that if a rebellion broke out in it, or if it were taken by an enemy, the safety of Matsuzaka would be immediately threatened. It was of the first importance, therefore, that it should be placed in the hands of an absolutely trustworthy man, and the cautious Ujisato wished to be quite sure of the loyalty of Gonshiro and to test him to the utmost before putting him in a position of so much importance and responsibility.

"Silence, Gonshiro!" thundered the daimio, keeping up the part he had decided to play a little longer. "How dare you say such a thing of your lord! Liar! I have no recollection of being saved by you or by any one else."

"Strange, my lord! Your words at the time were, 'A thousand thanks, Gonshiro! But for you I

should have been dead by now. I shall never forget what you have done and after the war I will give you a reward.' I want no reward—I am a plain soldier with neither wife nor child—but it is unbearable that you should thus ignore my service. It is an undoubted fact, my lord, that I did save your life and thus opened the way for our troops to take the castle of Ganshaku."

"It is a lie! You did not save my life."

"It is the truth! I did save you!"

"You are drunk; you do not know what you are saying. I repeat, you did not save my life!"

Gonshiro's blood was up. He threw discretion to the winds.

"Ingrate and liar! I did save your life!"

"A lie!"

Ujisato frowned darkly and seemed about to have the daring offender punished as he deserved, but apparently changing his mind, he laughed good-humouredly and,

"Look here, Gonshiro," he said, "you insist that you saved me; I deny it. At this rate there can be no end of the matter for each holds to his own opinion. But to settle the question once for all let us have a wrestling bout, you and I. If I am beaten I will admit that you saved me as you aver, and prostrating myself before you with both hands on the ground I will humbly beg your pardon for what I have said. That will be as great an humiliation as removing one's helmet on the field of battle and surrendering to the foe. On the other hand, should

you be thrown you will be branded as a liar and ordered to commit seppuku. Will you wrestle with me on those conditions?"

The guests were amazed. One whispered to another.

"What a proposal!"

"Monstrously unfair!"

"One contestant risks his life, the other a mere apology!"

"What are the chances?"

"Gonshiro is the better man."

"There I disagree with you—our lord has the greater skill. I wager his lordship will win."

"Gonshiro will never accept such conditions—they are too unequal!"

While these whispers were going round Gonshiro with head bent took an instant's thought. Then he looked up, stern defiance in his eye.

"My lord," he said, "I take up your challenge! I accept your conditions unfair though they be. I am a samurai and as such shrink from no danger. Strong in the truth of my cause I will wrestle with you."

"Good! At once. Prepare!"

"Your lordship, I am ready."

A space was cleared in the centre of the hall whilst the two champions divested themselves of all unnecessary clothing. Then the struggle began, and being well-nigh equally matched for some time neither gained any advantage over his opponent. At last, however, with a loud shout Gonshiro managed

to twist his body, and by a dexterous movement raised his adversary on his shoulders, to throw him by a supreme effort down on to the mats at a distance of eight or nine feet. Ujisato swooned, and great was the consternation with which all rushed to his assistance. Restoratives were administered and to the relief of the company consciousness soon returned. The defeated combatant was able, leaning on the arm of an attendant, to retire to his own private apartments. The banquet, of course, was abandoned, most of the guests returning home. Gonshiro left the castle in great dejection and exasperation.

"What a fool my lord has shown himself," were his thoughts. "I could never have conceived it of him. I will remain in his service no longer. It is not on this place alone that the sun shines. A man of my prowess can find a billet anywhere. Heigh ho! I will go and seek service with some other daimio—some one I can respect more than I can my Lord Ujisato."

Having made up his mind it did not take Gonshiro long to get ready. At midnight he stole secretly away intending never to return.

The next morning all the samurai made their appearance at the castle to enquire after the health of their lord—all that is, but Gonshiro. The daimio who had quite recovered himself noticed his absence and calling Gamo Gonzaemon, one of his karo, or chief councillors, he asked what had become of him.

"I beg to inform, your lordship," replied the karo, "I have just heard a report that he had not been

seen this morning and it is surmised that he has run away in consequence of the unfortunate occurrence of last evening."

"If that is true," exclaimed Ujisato, "I am indeed sorry. I did but dissimulate in order to test his fidelity, and if my words have lost me a good retainer I shall be much grieved. Order a search to be made and when he is found bring him instantly before me. Tell him I did but jest and that he shall have a liberal reward for the service he did me. Go at once, Gonzaemon; he cannot have gone far."

So the missing samurai was sought for in every likely and unlikely place, but without success. Nothing was seen or heard of him for many a long day.

An emaciated, shabbily dressed ronin[1] carrying two swords with worn and ragged hilt-strings and rusty scabbards, and having on his dusty feet well-worn straw sandals, walked up, with the swagger peculiar to his caste, to the front door of Gonzaemon's residence.

"Insolent fellow!" cried the attendant whose business it was to answer the door. "This is not the place for you. If you would ask alms go to the back."

"I am no beggar to crave for alms," replied the stranger proudly. "I am one Nishimura Gonshiro, till three years ago in the service of Lord Ujisato. I have come to speak a word with your master. Kindly inform his honour of my visit."

[1] A samurai who had renounced his clan and become a wanderer.

Gonzaemon was delighted to hear of the return of the long vainly sought absentee. To the disgust of the usher who looked with disdain on the dirty and travelworn appearance of the guest, he was admitted into the inner guest chamber. After a cordial greeting Gonzaemon asked:—

"And how have you been getting along since you left so suddenly, Gonshiro?"

"But badly, your honour. They say 'a faithful servant never serves two masters,' but my case has been different. You see, I forsook my lord and of my own will became a ronin. Hoping to enter the service of a more honourable chief I travelled from one province to another. But I was always unfortunate. Those whom I would have chosen to serve would have none of me—a deserter from another clan; those who would have accepted me were not good enough to suit my taste. After long and bitter experiences I have come to the conclusion that there is no daimio so worthy of allegiance as my former master, Lord Gamo. So I have come back to see if he will overlook my bad conduct in the past and let me re-enter his ranks. Of course, I do not expect to receive my former pay. I shall be grateful and more than satisfied if he will let me wait upon him as a humble attendant. Will you be so kind as to intercede for me?"

"You have done right to come back," answered the karo, kindly. "Sooth to say, our lord has greatly regretted his foolish jest and has caused strict search to be made to discover your whereabouts and

if possible get you to return. He will rejoice to hear my news. Wait here and refresh yourself while I go and tell him."

Gonzaemon did not keep his visitor waiting long. He told Gonshiro that his lordship was pleased that he had come back and desired to see him at once.

"Excuse my mentioning such a thing," continued the karo, "but your garments are worn and travel-stained. May I not accommodate you with a change of apparel before you present yourself before his lordship?"

"On no account," returned the samurai. "You are very kind, but allow me to go as I am. My shabby condition will give my lord some idea of the hardships I have undergone as a ronin."

"As you please, my independent fellow!"

The two men so different in aspect went up to the castle and waited in an ante-room till summoned to Lord Gamo's presence.

"Ah, Gonshiro!" he called out genially. "I am mightily glad to see you again. You were too hasty in running away. I was but teasing you and you took my words in bitter earnest. I hope you will take your old place and serve me as faithfully as before."

"Your kind words overwhelm me, your lordship," said Gonshiro humbly. "I have no words in which to express my sense of your clemency. I will henceforth serve you to the uttermost of my ability."

The good-natured Gonzaemon was delighted to witness this reconciliation between chief and vassal.

The daimio ordered a feast to be prepared in honour of the occasion, and presently, over the good cheer, they all became very merry. It was not long before Ujisato began, as on a former occasion, to talk rather boastfully of his exploits and his prowess on the field.

"Gonshiro, when I wrestled with you that time, we all remember, I was beaten because I was half intoxicated," he said. "Since then my health has much improved and I am much heavier and stronger than before. On the other hand, your many hardships have greatly reduced you and you are a mere shadow of your former self. Should we try a bout now, you would have no chance at all."

It might have been thought that learning wisdom from bitter experience Gonshiro would have had the sense to agree with his lord's words, and to have said "That is very true, your lordship. It was but by a fluke that I won before; I should have not the slightest chance now." But foolish fellow that he was, he forgot everything but the supposed aspersion on his strength and skill which he could not allow to pass unchallenged.

"I am very thin as your lordship truly observes," he said bluntly, "but my strength is unabated. It is fitting that a samurai should be stronger than his chief. My muscles were hardened in many a field of battle and in friendly contests—they are like wires. Excuse me, but I could not be thrown though five—nay ten—men of your weight should set upon me at the same time."

"What, braggart! You still boast of your strength! Well, if you are so sure of yourself you shall wrestle with me again."

"With pleasure, your lordship!" said the undaunted samurai.

"Get ready!"

"I am ready, your lordship."

With these words the two men rose and prepared for the struggle. Gonzaemon wondered at their infatuation. For years Ujisato had regretted the act that had cost him a faithful retainer. For years Gonshiro had wandered a ronin, homeless, and often without food. Chief and vassal had become reconciled and all was going well, when, for the sake of a little paltry pride, this happy state of things was again endangered and a permanent estrangement might be the result. He strove to remonstrate but neither would listen. All he could do was to advise Gonshiro, by dumb signs, to allow himself to be beaten; and Gonshiro coming too late to a better understanding of his rash conduct answered in the same manner, "I will."

Satisfied that he had averted a catastrophe, the karo offered to act as umpire, standing up with an open fan in his hand. After the preliminary moves the combatants grappled, and a hard tussle it was. Gonshiro honestly intended to let his master have the satisfaction of winning. "But," thought he, "if I let myself be thrown too easily my lord will suspect something; besides I cannot let him think me quite such a weakling as he would make out." Warming

to the fight he again thought, "If I allow myself to be beaten, having strength to win, I should be a contemptible creature selling himself for the sake of his place and pay. Nothing disgraces a samurai so much as to be a flatterer. 'A man lives for but one generation, but a good name lives forever.' A good name is above all material rewards. I cannot pretend defeat. I must do my best at all costs and come what may, throw my lord again."

Hereupon he braced his feet and bent his body, and with a loud shout shouldered his opponent, and threw him down three mats off just as he had done before.

The umpire never doubting that Gonshiro had followed his counsel and that it was he who was thrown, ran forward, exclaiming:—

"Well done, my lord! I never saw a better throw!"

He had no time to say more before he found out his mistake. What was his dismay to find that Gonshiro was again the victor and that it was his lord who had thus a second time suffered a humiliating defeat. It was too exasperating! The same story over again.

Now that his excitement had cooled down somewhat, Gonshiro was covered with shame and mortification at what he had done.

Ujisato rose without assistance and stamping his foot as though in rage stalked off to an inner apartment.

"Fool that I am, I have done it again!" cried Gonshiro in despair. "In spite of your advice, in

spite of my own determination, my vanity got the upper hand and forgetting all else I committed this unpardonable offence a second time. I will disembowel myself and I beg you to do me the honour to witness the act!"

So saying the unhappy man took up the short sword he had laid aside and was on the point of plunging it into his body, when the sliding door was hastily pushed open and Ujisato ran forward just in time to arrest his arm.

"Hold, hold! Gonshiro," he cried. "You are always too impetuous. I do not blame you for this—it is the true samurai spirit—the same spirit that in spite of want, of hunger and rags, disdains to flatter for the sake of gain. My brave fellow, I honour you for this! It might have been that the hardships of the last three years had changed your character—that you might now have been willing to sell your honour for my favour and worldly prosperity—so I feigned drunkenness and a boastful spirit that once more I might challenge you to fight and thus test you to the full. You have stood the test nobly. You disdained to flatter even at such a cost. You are indeed the pattern of all that a samurai should be! In recognition of your signal service to me at the storming of the Castle of Ganshaku I appoint you Governor of the Castle of Tage with a stipend of 10,000 koku. As a reward for throwing me today in the face of every temptation to do otherwise I give you a further stipend of 1,000 koku; and in acknowledgment of the defeat I sustained at your hands

three years ago you shall have yet another 1,000. Here is your writ of appointment."

At this unexpected magnanimity on the part of his lord even Gonshiro, hardened warrior though he was, could not restrain his tears.

In the years following, Gonshiro served his chief, Lord Gamo, faithfully and with devotion. When Ujisato was poisoned through the wiles of an adversary his loyal vassal killed himself in order to accompany his dearly loved master to Hades.

THE CARP IN A DREAM

Nearly a thousand years ago, in the reign of Emperor Daigo, at the temple of Miidera in Omi, there lived an old priest named Kogi, a celebrated artist. He did not, however, like making pictures of Buddhas, landscapes, flowers, birds and such commonplace subjects among painters in those days, but every time he was free from service, he enjoyed sailing a boat on the lake, and throwing fish he had bought of the fisherman back into the water, and, watching them as they swam away, made sketches of them. By and by he became skilful in painting fish.

Often he fell asleep, being tired of drawing, and dreamed that he swam in the water and played with the fish. When he awoke, he would take up his brush and make a picture of what he had seen in his dream, which he would call "the fish in a dream" and hang it on the wall, to show his friends. Many people who liked his work asked for them, and he willingly gave away, without the least hesitation, any but those of "the fish in a dream," and always said in a joke, "The fish preserved by a holy priest should not be given to those merciless people who

take life wantonly." Both his work and words were renowned everywhere.

Being taken ill, after a week he fell unconscious; his eyes closed and he was pronounced dead. His pupils were called together, and grieved over the death of their master. But when they were having a conference about preparations of the funeral, one of them, placing his hand on his master's breast, found that his body still retained a little warmth. So they sat around and watched in hope that life was not extinct.

After three days had passed, he drew breath, and sat up with wide-open eyes, as if awakened with a start. Looking about at his pupils, he asked, "How long have I been asleep?"

They told him of all that had passed three days since, and they were greatly rejoiced at his recovery. "Well," said the revived priest, "send word to Taira-no-suke, the believer, that I am come to life again. Bring him and his brother here in haste, and I will tell you a very, very strange story."

The priest, moreover, asked that the messenger should take care to look into the believer's house, to see whether they were having a dinner at that moment and the cook was seasoning some raw fish to make *sashimi.*

They wondered what that meant, but when the messenger went and looked into Taira-no-suke's house, sure enough, all his family sat at dinner, and what the priest said as to the cook proved true too.

Taira-no-suke listened with great wonder to the

messenger's words. Thinking there was something strange in all this, he put aside his cup and chopsticks and hurried to the temple, followed by his brother and a servant.

Seeing Kogi sitting on his bed, he congratulated him upon his reviving. Kogi asked him if he had told Bunshi, the fisherman, to catch some fish.

"Yes, I did," answered Taira-no-suke, with a look of amazement, "and how do you know all that?"

"Well," said the priest, "listen to me and see if what I tell you is true. Bunshi brought to your house a basket of fish; one of them a red carp three feet in length. You were playing at checkers with your brother, and your servant, watching the game, was eating a big peach. When you saw the fish, you were greatly pleased and you gave three glasses of wine to the fisherman. Your cook came out and took the fish into the kitchen to make some *sashimi*. Now what do you say to that, friend?"

"It was indeed as you say in every particular," replied Taira-no-suke, and he and the others present were much perplexed at Kogi's tale, and persistently inquired how it had come to pass that the priest knew all that had happened at his friend's house.

The priest himself wondered that his dream was all real, and he told how, as he remembered it, when he could hardly endure his fever, he arose, and went outdoors leaning on a staff. In the fresh air, he felt recovered, quite as strong as ever, and as if he were a bird which had left its cage and flown back into the azure sky. He had walked on over the hills and

fields, until he found himself on the bank of the lake. Looking at the clear water through which he could see small fish swimming, and pebbles on the bed, he thought he would take a bath, and took off his clothes and jumped in.

He had never been a good swimmer, but now he could swim about buoyantly any way he pleased. He thought, however, that man could never make himself as at home in the water as fish, and wished in his mind he could have enjoyed himself as well.

Just then a large fish at his side said to him, "What you wish is very easy to fulfill. Please wait a moment." And it went down swiftly into the deep. After a little while, there came up from beneath the waves a fairy-looking creature, mounted on the fish and clad in a splendid court robe, accompanied by a great retinue of fishes. She beckoned the priest and said: "I am a messenger from the Sea God who liveth in the Water Palace. He heareth that thou hast shown a world of mercy toward the fish, and how thou wishest to be as at home in the water as they. So our lord giveth thee a suit of the Gold Carp's clothes, and permitteth thee to indulge thyself in the pleasures of the Water Palace. But take care not to be tempted by the nice smell of worms which are put on sharp hooks. Be sure thou dost not touch them, or thou wilt lose thy life." With these words the fairy on the fish turned away and vanished into the deep sea.

Struck with wonder, the priest looked about himself, and, lo! he was indeed a carp with golden scales

all over his body. Trying to move his limbs, he found that they had been changed to fins, and he could swim about just as freely as a real fish.

Now he was beside himself with joy and he had quite a time sporting in the waves. When it was warm he rose to enjoy the cool, and when it was stormy he sank for security from danger. Sometimes, when playing near the shore at the outlet of the lake, he was alarmed by waders, and dived beneath the waters, upon which the green shadows of the hills and islands lay wavering.

Sometimes in the darkness of night, when people sailed in a boat on their way home from their nightly amusements in the old town beyond, he was aroused from sleep behind the reeds, by the boatman's oar.

Sometimes when the moon, rising over the mountains, shone upon the waters, he rose up to the surface for fun, to catch the floating "golden goblet," which, being nothing but a reflection, was broken to pieces and scattered about upon the waves the moment he touched it. At other times in the depth of night when all was still and dark, and he spied out with his longing eyes a dim light above, he floated, and drew near it, only to find to his disappointment that it was a fisherman's fire on the shore.

While thus amusing himself, he began to feel very hungry and he was going about in search of food, but found nothing nice, until at length he saw Bunshi, the fisherman, hanging down his fishing line over his boat-side. A bait was seen at its end, such a beauty, so big and red, and it smelled so nice. But he

thought of the fairy's warnings. He thought who and what he was. To be attracted to a fish's food, how silly it would be for a man, for a follower of Buddha! He swam away. But after a while, finding himself so weary that he could no longer endure it, he looked at the bait again, and said to himself, "It seems quite impossible that I should be killed by only swallowing that little bait. Besides, the fisherman is my old friend; what should I fear?"

And he rushed at the tempting bait and swallowed it all. But the sharp hook was there, and he felt himself pulled up quickly out of the water, and Bunshi took hold of him.

He had cried out, "What do you do with me, friend?" but Bunshi, looking quite indifferent, put him into a basket he had in his boat, left the boat behind the reeds and took the basket with Kogi, or the carp, in it to Taira-no-suke.

Taira-no-suke, who was playing at checkers with his brother on the veranda, was very pleased with it and told the cook to dress it at once. "Why, gentlemen," screamed Kogi with sorrow, "you forget me? Let me go back to the temple!"

In spite of all his efforts the people around seemed as heedless as the fisherman, and roared with laughter, clapping their hands. The cook taking him down into the kitchen, put him upon a board, pressed his head with his left hand, and took a glistening knife in his right.

Kogi struggled for his life, crying out, "Help! help! Why do you kill a disciple of Buddha?" but

the cook pressed him all the tighter and was just on the point of cutting him, when he awoke with a great start.

All had listened with amazement to his strange story and wondered how all that the priest had dreamed could have corresponded to a nicety with what had actually happened before he awoke. Taira-no-suke hastily sent his servant home to throw all the fish back into the lake.

Kogi lived a happy life to a great age. When he died all his pictures of carp were thrown into the lake, in accordance with his will, and the fish in the pictures came out of the silk canvases and swam joyfully away in the water. So not a painting of carp, it is said, was left behind him. One of his pupils, Narimitsu, was reputed to have been gifted with his master's inspired secret, and it is written in an old book that once he painted some cocks and hens upon the screens of the Emperor Kanin's palace, which were so true to nature that a cock, when looking at the picture took them for rivals, and boldly attacked them.

SHŪZO'S WIFE—A STORY OF TRUE LOVE

By T. Monoo

In the old days a man named Shuzo lived in a village two ri from the town of Tsuyama, in the province of Mimasaka. He led a single yet devoted life. When he was but eight years old his parents betrothed him to a baby girl of three, named Kuniko. The parents of the infants thus affianced kept their secret, and the young couple grew up as friends and companions. Shuzo was now 21 and Kuniko 16, and they entered fully into that stage of life where they understood the full meaning of true affection. Their innocent childhood had now developed into maturity and their childish love had now been replaced by the flaming passion. Shuzo was handsome, and delicately fair was Kuniko. She was first among the maidens of the village, and many swains were smitten with love.

But both were loyal in their mutual affection. Strange it was, however, that though they were so deeply bound to each other they had not the courage to express themselves. Downcast eye and blushing face on one side was met by a fidgety uncertainty on the other. The first love needs much encourage-

ment to manifest itself in young folks, and cooing is not done so much by words as by tacit physical manifestations.

One day, by some mysterious, magnetic agency, it came to pass that their love was exposed, and they pledged themselves to each other, but both were equally regarded as models of filial piety, and without the parents' consent they would not be happy. Now Shuzo and Kuniko were in a dilemma, for little they dreamed that they were already affianced.

The parents of Shuzo and Kuniko had long been thinking that the betrothed couple must in due time be informed of their engagement, concluded in infant days, for the ignorance of betrothed couples in such cases often entails undesirable results. It came to pass, therefore, that they made their son and daughter cognizant of the facts, wondering inwardly whether they would gladly obey the parental decree. The revelation of the happy truth filled parents and children with the deepest happiness and content, and now the young couple had good prospects of gratifying their burning affection without a breach of duty to their parents. It was decided that the marriage should take place five years hence, when Shuzo would be 26 and Kuniko 21. Five years is a period awfully long to hot youth, but "time fleeth without delay" men go and come, patient or impatient of the speed of it. Four summers had come and gone and Shuzo entered into his 25th and Kuniko her 20th. It was in the fine autumn season, and with the advent of another autumn Kuniko was to be the bride of

Shuzo. Her ecstasy was as truly harmonious as the joy of Shuzo. Her beauty had now attained its zenith—beauty combined with gentleness and useful domestic accomplishments. Many suitors had sought her hand, and when they learned that she was betrothed, Shuzo was envied by all.

But it is the way of the world that "no happiness endures." Kuniko fell ill. It was thought at first only a slight cold. Nobody thought it would be a fatal disease, and all expected her to recover very soon, but day by day she wasted and changed for the worse. With the progress of time, the true character of the ailment revealed itself. At first neither Kuniko nor Shuzo was informed of the fatal nature of the disease—only the parents knew. The end of Kuniko's life was fast approaching, as if a beautiful flower were destroyed by the storm. Her parents thought, as she was lying on her death bed, to turn her soul towards Buddha and in peace to resign herself to the inevitable hour, and at the same time to persuade Shuzo to relinquish his hope of marriage. Then it was found to the surprise of all that Kuniko had been long resigned to her fate. She had felt that her illness was not of a nature to be easily cured and—"the life of the soul is eternal, and their betrothal would continue to eternity." She was longing to see Shuzo before she departed and to say farewell. The comforters, therefore, were themselves comforted, by her sweetness and resignation.

Shuzo visited her, but on account of the agony in his heart he was speechless.

"We have been betrothed since our infant days," said Kuniko, "and by the will of providence, I must depart before you. If a few years longer were allowed me in this world, I would bear any hardship or shame with you, but even if that could be possible this delicate body of mine would never make you a good wife. Our union is now beyond hope. My flesh is soon to die, but my immortal soul will always attend you."

Shuzo wept at the passionate words of adieu and in fragmentary articulation he said: "Kunikosan, you have said just what I have been thinking. My heart is too bestirred to say further. I can't say much except that you shall be my wife from generation to generation—even in our eternal life."

"Is that your firm determination?"

"Yes, as sure as Buddha exists, I shall never marry any one in the flesh."

Kuniko now looked relieved. Her inmost purpose was to know whether Shuzo would marry after she had gone, and now that she knew his intention she was well contented.

With tears in his eyes, Shuzo took leave. The dying girl lifted her emaciated cheeks and yet with the sweet smile which had pleased him from their infant days, saw him until he had left the room, gently shutting the sliding door.

It was toward sunset. The cool autumn breeze was blowing softly, refreshing the mind and body. The leaves, reddened or browned, fell from the

branches; the ground seemed covered with a glorious brocade woven by the god of autumn.

The gong of a distant temple was booming, telling of the hour of the sinking sun, which often reminds the thoughtful of the mutability of human life. With the solemn and serene vibration of the temple bell, the life of Kuniko, which had been hanging as by a thread, ceased to exist. Her untimely death was lamented; her stricken parents wept night and day. The funeral rites were duly performed, and the remains of Kuniko were consumed. A small quantity of ashes was all that remained of the beautiful flower.

. . . . . .

One day Shuzo's mother called him to her, and after having soothed him said: "Kuniko has been taken away and we are all sorrowing, but human affairs very often go worse than we desire, and the wisest thing for you to do is to forget Kuniko and turn your thoughts to one who would take her place. You are in your twenty-fifth year, and it is the season for a man to marry. We are stricken in age and vigour; we must hasten to retire from active work. You are our only heir and the supporter of our old age; we must choose you a wife, for to see our grandchild is now our sole ambition."

Shuzo was for some time speechless, but breaking silence he replied: "You say nothing but the truth, but I must decline your honourable instruction and lead a single life for the present."

The mother was perplexed and continued: "Why

can you not wed 'for the present' and how long do you need to be a single man?"

"I beg your pardon, it must be for life."

She was astonished and angered at his response: "Is this a statement that has come from your sober mind?"

"Yes, I am earnest." He was faint-hearted and his eyes were full of tears. His mother too well understood his reason now to ask him further, but continued to instruct him to make him change his mind. "I understand your sense of obligation to the dead Kuniko has made you determine not to marry, and I say it is not without reason. But still greater reason we have why you must obey our instruction. The most important duty of a family to its ancestors is the perpetuation of the family name. It is a grave responsibility laid upon our shoulders, which we, men and women, as members of a family, owe to the nation, which is founded upon reverence for ancestors. You are the only heir of this house, but if you refuse to marry it must become extinct. Think over your duty to your ancestors."

He had never disobeyed his parents, even where their commands were hard and absurd. Now, his mother's instruction was convincing and how could Shuzo disobey it? But the charm of the dead Kuniko's voice when he vowed to her that he would never marry, still lingered in his ears, and he was at a loss how he would act in this grave crisis. Wiping the tears from his cheeks he entreated his mother that the marriage be postponed until he reached thirty

years of age; by that time, he said, he would determine one way or the other.

"If you follow our instruction, five years or even ten might be waited for," said his mother, and Shuzo was dismissed, not giving a definite answer. The parents thought time would change their son's determination, and the son thought that time would change theirs.

The first anniversary of Kuniko's death had come round, and she had been forgotten by many, but her memory grew the more sacred for Shuzo as time went on. He had read and studied much, and in these days, when he had arrived at the determination to study further in the capital he, as his filial duty dictated, asked his parents to let him go. But they would not grant his request. They were advanced in age, and it would not do for them to part with their only support in their old age. Taking advantage of this occasion, they again advised him to accept the situation—and marry. Things came to pass—that his request and their advice took the form of a kind of bargain, and it was concluded that she would allow him to go up to Kioto for some few years, while in his turn he would act on their advice when he returned after having completed the course of study.

One fine autumn morning he started on his journey to the capital. On his way he happened to seek a lodging at an inn in Himeji, Harima Province. It was a still, calm, and serene night, and after supper, some hours were spent in musing on things of the past. Alone in a strange country, far away from his

native province, where he had left his aged father and mother, and experiencing the hardship of the long travel of those days, his heart was swelled with many emotions. How his parents would get on during his absence; how he would manage the great question after a certain number of years when he had returned home, and how the spirit of the dead Kuniko would look upon him if he broke his solemn pledge. It then came upon him that the day was the first anniversary of his betrothed's death. Her memory was revived, and he thought over the things which had come to pass a year before. He burned incense to console her soul. The night was growing deep, and the sweet savour continued to issue from the precious incense. The inn maid called at the room when Shuzo was holding a mass, and reminded him of the lateness of the hour. She wondered at the sweet fragrance, and the strange attitude of meditation of the young traveller.

The bed was made, and Shuzo got in. Exhaustion after the day's hard travel overtook him, and he was soon fast asleep. At dead of night the flash of a strange light shot into the room, and the figure of Kuniko made its appearance. Shuzo was awakened and startled by the vision, but he was not afraid. It was his wife, and sweet communion took place between the faithful lovers. He knew that Kuniko was not a being of the temporary world, and thought she must be a ghost or that he must be bewitched. A mysterious oblivion reigned over his mind, and he felt as if he was in a bridal chamber. They lay down

to rest,—not to sleep, they had much to tell. They talked of past pleasure, the present joy, and future hopes. Soon the idea that she was dead came upon him, and she then assumed a starveling and tapering form and addressed him with a gentle rebuke:

"You must not forget our pledge. I am your eternal wife and you shall not marry any other. There shall be no other wife for you. I cannot understand why you have accepted your mother's advice and promised her that you will wed in a certain number of years. Whom do you mean to marry? There is a sound reason to follow her advice on account of an heir to carry on the family name. I can satisfy that demand. I will bear a child to you of flesh and bone. Remember, I am your eternal wife." She stretched her hands, and Shuzo again forgot that she was dead. Soon they were in the embrace of each other, and lying together as in the bridal chamber.

The day dawned and Shuzo missed the form of Kuniko. He was still in a land of mystery. He wondered whether he had dreamed, or had been in a trance or whether she had awoke before him, and yet was still there. He went out expecting to find her, who he thought, would be engaged in her toilet. Washing himself and returning to his room, he was soon served with a cup of tea. Strange it seemed to him, there were two cups, and two cushions were laid as if there were two persons to use them. The tea cups were soon replaced by two tables bearing two meals. Shuzo wondered why everything was so served, and thought a second guest would soon come

to be served in the same room, for the sake of convenience.

He was to make haste on his journey that day, having a great distance to walk. He helped himself to the meal and the repast being soon over, the bill was brought to him by his order. He found the account high—just double as much as he had expected. More than once he was tempted to make enquiry if there was no mistake, but it being his maiden-journey he had no desire to make investigation about that matter. He soon drowned his wonder in the idea that local custom made the bill so much bigger than other places. He came to the door to start on his journey. The hotel people were there, too, to see him off with respect, to thank him, he conjectured, for his liberality in payment. After having made respectful salutation, the chief clerk of the inn queried: "Are you starting alone, and what has become of your honourable wife? Is she staying here today?" With unrestrained wonder, he looked at them, but supposing they were playing a joke on him, he replied: "When did I bring my wife here? and how do you know I have a wife?" They no less wondered than he, and remarked, "It was about the middle of last night that your beautiful wife called at the door, asking us to show her the room where you were resting. She said we had only to tell where you were sleeping, and do nothing else as she hoped not to disturb you from a sound sleep. We did as she asked, and this morning she was with you in the same room as our bill tells. It was only a moment ago that we

saw her." Shuzo was struck with amazement, as his wonder of the night's sweet union with Kuniko was still lingering in his senses as a dream. The spirit of Kuniko had indeed visited him in visible shape, and still was following him! But he thought it best to elude their suspicion by equivocation. Suppressing the deep emotion that beset him, he said: "Yes, it is true that she came to me last night, but to speak truth, business made it necessary that she leave here before me."

Shuzo started from the hotel of Himeji leaving the people there still in some wonder, yet paying him hearty adieus. In the capital he attained to profound scholarship and his literary fame spread far and wide. His elegiac verses exercised great influence on literature and the sensibilities of the whole nation of his day, and he was thought to have been inspired by the soul of his dead betrothed in the beautiful sentiments he so reverently expressed. He lived as a single man, in our mundane sense, but Kuniko waited on him without ceasing. His tribute to the soul of Kuniko was a masterpiece of verse, which sentiment was supposed to have owed its inspiration to the departed spirit. And the perpetuation of the Shuzo family name? Not long after the reunion of Shuzo with Kuniko's soul at the Himeji lodging, a foundling was found at the house of Shuzo at his native village. It was warmly clad but wailing, and out of pity it was picked up by the family and nursed. The babe proved to be the image of the dead Kuniko, and it was adopted, and carried on the family name.

THE BELL OF KAWAGOYE

Many years ago, to the temple of Kita-in at Kawagoye, in the Province of Musashi, came a fair woman late at night and wanted to see the superior of the temple. Wondering at this untimely visit, the priest came out to see who the visitor might be.

"What business have you to do with me at such a late hour?"

"I am one who has recently removed to this village and have come to ask you a favour. Will you be kind enough to grant my request, honourable priest?"

At these polite words the priest asked her what she desired, and the woman raising her head slightly said:

"It is no other than that I respectfully beseech you not to strike the bell of your temple for one hundred days. If you will graciously promise me this, I will make your bell sound much sweeter to repay your kindness.

So earnest was her petition that the priest thought how she would grieve if her request was refused, and he benignantly said:

"Very well, I will not then strike the bell for one hundred days."

"I feel most grateful to you. I shall never forget your kindness."

With these words the night visitor left the temple with a light heart. Her demeanour when leaving, however, was such as to arouse a sort of suspicion in the mind of the priest, who soon secretly followed her to discover the real nature of the woman.

The woman, on the other hand, on coming to a deep pond at the south corner of the temple grounds, vanished in the darkness.

The priest, though greatly wondering at her sudden disappearance, thought that his position and honour behoved him to keep his word, not to strike the bell for one hundred days.

Ninety-nine days elapsed without a single stroke of the Kita-in temple bell, and the last important day of the priest's covenant came.

On the evening of this day a young noble lady called on the priest again at his temple. Thinking that it must evidently be the same woman whom he had promised not to strike the bell, the priest came out to receive the visitor, but it was quite a different woman.

"What is your name, Madam, and what business brings you here?" the priest asked.

"You will do me a favour, I hope, my priest?" came the reply.

While watching and talking thus with the visitor, the priest was utterly enchanted by the spell of the beautiful lady, and all he could answer to her request was, "Yes, whatever it may be."

"Oh, it is very kind of you. I know I am asking you too much; you will please strike your bell for me tonight, and a single stroke will do."

Whereupon the good priest thought of the promise he had given to another woman, and was much embarrassed. If "Tonight," he continued to think, was passed without striking the bell, he should have well redeemed his promise, and so there was no way of getting out of the situation but to ask the present petitioner to wait until the following day. But, when the priest turned once more to the fair damsel to address her, he was suddenly spellbound and could do nothing but agree to her request.

And the fair lady, before the priest had time to betray himself, urged him, saying:

"Will you not strike the bell at this very moment?"

The priest, not without a reluctant heart, ordered a young disciple to carry out his consent, and the bell of the Kita-in Temple gave forth once again a sweet tone after the silence of ninety-nine days.

The instant the bell was struck, the fair and noble lady transformed herself into a hideous dragon before the eyes of the amazed priest, and causing a dense cloud and a fierce wind, ascended in it to the sky.

The young priest at the belfry, unaware of this awful scene, gave a second stroke to the bell, but this time it emitted a jarring sound. He attempted another stroke, but with no better effect.

Then the poor little priest began to puzzle over the

possible cause of this. But before he had time to think any further, he was struck almost deaf with a loud, powerful sound coming, as it seemed to him, from somewhere at the south corner of the temple, and with that sound down came furious thunderbolts, threatening to crush and smash the temple and all around it with their raging power.

The poor old priest, being engulfed in the mighty vortex, began to revolve, and, though the faithful acolyte, forgetting his fear, hastened to his master's rescue, the whirling would not stop until the priest had completed ninety-nine gyrations and stopped by himself, but only within an inch of his life.

After coming to himself it took the old priest some days to realize that the woman whom he first promised not to ring the bell was the master dragon of the south pond, who disliked the ringing of the bell, while it was another dragon that came to the priest in the form of a noble lady and enchanted him with her spell, forcing him to ring his bell, the sound of which she liked to hear.

Ever since the occurrence of this event, the bell of the Kita-in has lost its melodious tone.

THE FOWLER

A NO KYOGEN

Translated by A. L. Sadler

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

Shite (Chief Actor) ..... Emma
Ato (After, or Secondary Actors) ..... Three Devils
Koato (Little After, or Minor Actor) ..... Seirai

Emma: I am Emma-O the Lord of Hell! I propose to go forth for a while through the Six Ways of Sentient Existence! Yai! Yai! Are my retainers there?

Three Devils: Here we are!

Emma: If any sinners arrive just pitch them down into Hell and torture them.

Devils: We will.

Shite: But who is there to save the sinners who have done no sin?

Seirai: Here stand I, Seirai, a mighty fowler in the Shaba-world. I was intended to live to a good old age, but the Wind of Impermanence swept me away, and here I am on the Dark Road.

Song: Regretfully he leaves his old familiar life,
And setting out on the strange road on foot,
Ere long he comes to traverse the Six Ways.

Seirai. It seems that I now stand at the cross roads of the Six Ways, and must look about to consider how I may get to Heaven.

Devil: I smell mankind! Ah, as I thought, here comes a sinner. I must announce the matter. A sinner has arrived, my lord.

Emma: Then quickly torture him!

Devil: Most certainly! Now then, my sinner! Heaven is far distant, but Hell very nigh; so haste your steps! Ho-Ho!—You differ from the common run of sinners; you seem amused. Who were you when you dwelt among mankind?

Seirai: I was Seirai, a mighty fowler in the Shaba-world.

Devil: If you were a fowler, you were one who took life both by night and day. Your sins were very great. I certainly must torture you in Hell

Seirai: No, no! My sins were not so great. I pray you let me go to Paradise.

Devil: That I cannot. You must come before the King of Hell. My Lord!

Emma: What is it now?

Devil: This sinner was a fowler in the Shaba-world; and so I say his sins are great, for he has taken life continually, and must go down to Hell. But he says it is not so. What is to be done?

Emma: Bring him here to me!

Devil: So I will. Come hither now, for Emma summons you.

Seirai. At your command.

Emma: Now then, you sinner! You did nothing but catch birds in the Shaba-world. You are a great rascal, and must go down to Hell!

Seirai. 'Tis true I caught them; but this I did only to feed my hawks, and so sustain their life. What harm was there in that?

Emma: And these hawks; they are birds too are they not?

Seirai: Most certainly they are, my Lord.

Emma: In that case you are hardly much to blame.

Seirai: Indeed 'tis so. The blame is with the hawks, and not with me. So let me go to Heaven.

Emma: But as I do not yet know the taste of birds, and on this Mountain of Shide there are many of them, do you catch some for me with that pole of yours, and then I will consider your request.

Seirai: That will be easy enough. I will soon bring you some.

Chorus: Lo! Now he goes to catch the birds. From the southern plain of the Mountain of Shide, many flocks of birds come flying, and as soon as he sees them he darts his pole in among them and takes them. Then he roasts them and offers them to Emma.

Emma: Ha! I will try them. (*Eats.*) How good they are, forsooth!

Seirai: Come on, you devils, too!

Devils: (*Eating and smacking their lips.*) Good! Good! How tasty!

Emma: I have never tasted anything I liked better in all my life. So as a reward I permit you to go back to the Shaba-world, and catch birds again for three more years.

Seirai: How can I thank you!

Chorus: Released, he goes back to the Shaba-world, for three years more to catch his birds again. Ducks, pheasants, wild-geese, storks, and others too. For even the small birds he gets specified; and so returns. And Emma, in regret at losing him, gives him the jewelled diadem from off his head. Seirai bows low in gratitude, and starts his journey to the upper air.

THE FENCING MASTER'S STORY

"Yes," said the fencing master, folding his huge forearms over his black-lacquered breastplate. "The maidens of former times were not so flighty perhaps as those of today. No opportunity? Well, they did not go to school, it is true, but there may have been opportunities; it was not that so much as the penalties being more dreadful, I think. You know Maeda San who lives in the *yashiki* at the end of the street? Well, an incident happened in his family a generation or two ago that will explain what I mean.

"The head of the family was a young man of sixteen, for the father had died, and he had a sister, a few years older than he, a very beautiful girl with fine black hair and a lovely complexion. One of the retainers who lived in the *yashiki* fell in love with her, and somehow or other persuaded her to run away with him one night. They kept the affair quite secret, but it was not long before their absence was discovered, and several other samurai set off after them to bring them back for punishment. They had hoped to get right away, and took the road to the north. There were only four roads by which to leave the city. They had got as far as the pass over

the northern hills, when they thought it best to hide in one of the houses of a little hamlet, for they knew that they would be overtaken on the road. They told the master of the house to keep silent and went upstairs, for being a kind of inn the houses there had two stories. In a little while the pursuing samurai came along making enquiries and searching houses. Perhaps they had no actual right to do this, but in those days few ordinary people would dare to oppose the wishes of those who wore two swords. At last they came to the house where the pair were hiding, and in spite of the protests of the owner, began to search it. Now the runaway retainer, concluding that nothing remained but to put an end to himself and the girl in the usual manner, drew his sword and slashed deep into the girl's throat, so that she fell dead on the *tatami.* He then started to open himself as custom demanded, when the samurai rushed in and caught him in the act.

It was the rule in those days that the couple that had done such an improper thing must be cut down by the head of the girl's family in his own *yashiki,* and that afterwards he must report to the daimio in due form, that his name might be saved from reproach. The samurai interrupted the *seppuku* when it was only about half completed, and brought both lovers back to the city, the girl quite dead and her lover dying. On arriving home they were set down forthwith on the stones in the garden and the youthful master of the house carefully and precisely struck off their heads. Not till then were they pronounced to be

officially dead, and the affair was reported to our lord as having been dealt with as prescribed. So, you see, in those days girls would think twice before committing such foolishness. But even then perhaps there were those who evaded the consequences. Who knows?"

OSHICHI OF THE GREENGROCER

A Classic Story of Old Yedo, Told by T. Minoo

By the criminal law of old Japan, incendiarism was punished with death at the stake. Countless tales are told of this awful punishment, and the causes thereof, and the story of Yaoya Oshichi is the most famous of these, being familiar to every Japanese.

Two hundred and thirty years ago lived a samurai, a foot soldier named Yamase Saburobei. He was a vassal of the Daimio Mayeda, ancestor of the present distinguished head of the family, Marquis Mayeda. Yamase lived in Kaga province, and was proud of belonging to the greatest of the Tokugawa daimio; he was frequently in Yedo, the Shogun's capital, as a member of his lord's military escort.

Now a foot-soldier (ashigaru) ranked as the lowest among the samurai class, and for an ashigaru to look for promotion was almost hopeless. It was a matter over which Saburobei gave much thought.

One day he said to his wife: "It is little better to be an ashigaru than a mere merchant. I prefer to become a plain citizen and shopkeeper and resign my position. What do you think?"

The good wife agreed, and immediately this seri-

ous decision was reached, a petition setting forth their desires was forwarded to their lord and master, who graciously permitted the step to be taken.

Yamase Saburobei, released from his allegiance and official duties, started in business as a shopkeeper, and became a greengrocer in Oiwake-cho, Komagome, Hongo-ku, and as Saburobei, a common name among samurai, seemed out of place, he changed his name to Tarobei.

Tarobei was really more a man of business than a soldier; he was polite, genial, and likely to get on. He was more moderate in his prices than was usual in the trade, and the reputation of his shop soon spread in the neighbourhood. Business prospered. It was commonly said the vegetables in his shop possessed wings—his turnover was so rapid that his stocks seemed to fly away. Wealth came to him rapidly, and Tarobei was happy, and thankful.

. . . . . .

Thankful and in a way contented, Tarobei lacked one essential to complete happiness—he had no child to inherit his fortune and carry on the family name. He and his good wife grieved whenever they thought of this.

. . . . . .

One day they were advised by a friend to propitiate a certain deity, the friend giving many instances of answers to just such prayers of childless couples. Tarobei and his wife decided to act upon this friendly advice, and daily they visited the local shrine of the deity and offered a humble prayer together.

The appeals of the righteous seldom remain unanswered. Quite unlike the majority of the members of their trade, Tarobei and his wife were honest as well as devout. It was just ten months from the day when their first prayer was offered up when a baby-daughter was born and she was named Oshichi.

The good man's gratitude knew no bounds. "Danger past, God is forgotten," is often the way with men, but such was not the nature of Tarobei. His gratitude was expressed in the erection of a great and goodly temple, the provision of huge stone lanterns and stately torii—and all were dedicated to his patron deity. None enjoyed greater credit in Hongo.

Not only had the yaoya and his wife been granted the boon they craved, but with the passing years it became clear that their daughter grew in beauty and gentleness; moreover, in ability she was so gifted that at fifteen years of age her learning and skill in womanly accomplishments were unequalled. Such was the greengrocer's daughter, and in the great city of Yedo she ranked first. Her fame was established when she became known far and wide as Yaoya Oshichi—Oshichi of the Greengrocer.

Much anxious thought was given to the well-being of Oshichi by the now aging Tarobei and his faithful wife, and nothing was of greater consequence to them than the choice of a husband. Again, the overpowering desire for the perpetuation of the family name—the longing for a grandchild which would assure it.

Towards the end of the year marking Oshichi's

fifteen years, fire broke out in the Honmyoji, the temple in the Maruyama section of Hongo, and a high wind blowing, the fire spread beyond the temple precincts, and threatened the greater part of Hongo, much of which was in a few hours reduced to ashes.

The New Year was near at hand, and enormous confusion was caused to numerous busy tradesmen such as the yaoya, for they saw themselves burnt out in the busiest season of the year. The homeless poor were now shivering in the cold, and even the well-to-do and wealthy were little better off. No insurance companies in those days, everything was lost; no communications, other than that of the pedestrian, the outcasts remained where they were, a charge on the authorities.

Tarobei was making temporary arrangements, was about to build a hut for the protection of his family, when a friend accosted him. He was the chief priest of the Enyoji, and kindly invited the greengrocer and his family to stay at the temple until such time as a home could be found—a new house built. Thankfully the invitation was accepted, and in due time Tarobei, his wife and daughter were installed in the temple compound.

The hospitable priest did everything possible for the comfort of his friends: in the quiet surroundings, in the massive building. Tarobei enjoyed the new life, and devoted his leisure to the service of Buddha, attending lectures on Buddhism. This temple is still in existence; it is in Sasugaya-cho, Koishikawa-ku.

Now there lived in the temple as page, a student, Yamada Sahei by name, eighteen years of age, who was an attractive young man, of good character and accomplishments. Little wonder he was the real attraction the temple had for the young women of the neighbourhood, and, if truth be told, not many hours had passed before Oshichi had seen with approving eye the page. The bud of maiden love burst into bloom in the heart of Oshichi, so runs the old legend. She tried to but could not forget the figure of Sahei.

Parents in old Japan were perhaps more vigilant than even today in the rearing of daughters, and the little liberties now enjoyed, which are cramped enough, were undreamed of in the time of Oshichi. Therefore, much as she might secretly desire it, she had few opportunities of seeing Sahei, for, if not her father's eyes, her mother's were constantly upon her.

But one afternoon, towards sunset, when gazing at the beautiful garden of the temple court, the figure of Sahei in her mind's eye, a man emerged on to the veranda of the room overlooking the garden on the opposite side, and more careful glance told her he was none other than the page whom she scarcely knew but fondly loved. For some time she gazed, as if in a trance. Then followed mingled but delightful feelings: rapture, shyness, timidity, venturesomeness. Here was her only chance to let Sahei know how she regarded him, and while determined to go at once to him, many a time she hesitated. But in the end love triumphed, and she walked, unconcerned as

might be, across the garden, treading daintily on the raised stones—seemingly not seeing anything or anybody. How to make her love challenge engrossed her busy thoughts.

Sahei, who did not seem to see anything particular, was busy with a pair of pincers trying to extract from his thumb a wood splinter. She noticed he was using the pincers with his left hand—obviously a most awkward thing to do. Sahei needed help—here was a good pretext, and boldly she offered to remove the splinter. With flaming cheeks she spoke.

With bowed head she took his hand, and applied the pincers: with indescribable tenderness Sahei gazed on her beautiful face. O, the beauty of youth!

Crabbed age, taking note of such matters, would say Sahei had long looked with loving eyes on Oshichi; reciprocal love had in fact burned in the bosoms of both from their first meeting, and the love current had never ceased to flow. It was Oshichi who first revealed her tender regard for Sahei, and the youth was not backward in making a similar admission. In spirit, at that moment of revelation, they were man and wife.

For six months the family of Tarobei lived at the temple, and in that time the young couple joined by their own secret pledge, had many an hour of joyful association.

. . . . . .

In the meantime carpenters had been busy putting up a new house on the site of Tarobei's old home. Construction was finished and with many words of

thanks, the greengrocer and his family left the temple, and returned to Oiwake-cho.

The new house was larger, more pretentious than the old, and it was not long before trade moved in the old channels.

But Oshichi was now the saddest girl in the world. Continually she brooded over the happy days spent at the temple, and yearned for reunion with Sahei. How could it be accomplished? The opportunity, it seemed to her, would never come.

Tarobei's shop was often visited by a young man named Kichisaburo, the son of a porter at the Kichishoji, in Komagome. He did odd jobs, and was a prodigal fellow who had been disinherited by his father. The reason nobody knew, but Tarobei treated this young fellow with great favour, so much so, that in his conceit he ventured to woo his master's daughter—or had intentions that way, but saw little opportunity to press his suit.

Now this rascal was actually the first to suspect the relations existing between Oshichi and Sahei, and the discovery, long suspected, made him desperate. Sahei he came to hate, and he felt no less revengeful towards Oshichi.

Day by day Oshichi pined in loneliness; she often kept her room for hours at a time, refusing to come forth, and the matter became the subject of comment among curious and not unjealous mothers in the neighbourhood.

One afternoon, Kichisaburo, feigning indifference to the passion burning in him, entered her room, and

said: "Young mistress, why are you in such low spirits nowadays?"

Oshichi, attempting a smile, replied: "What do you mean? I am by no means in low spirits."

"It is in vain to conceal your relations with Sahei, and you need not do so. I am not a rival in love, and you are my honourable mistress. Set your mind at ease; write to him, and I will take the letter."

Oshichi flushed deeply, conscience-guilty, but his seeming kindliness threw her off her guard. She confessed her relations with Sahei, and sitting down wrote openly of her feeling for him, and sorrow at not being able to see him. The letter was delivered, and an answer came expressing the same sentiments.

Kichisaburo's rewards for this service of go-between were great. Many trinkets of gold and silver and other valuables were given to him, as well as articles of clothing. The natural avarice of the man was fed until his desires became bottomless: the more that was given him the more he wanted.

To Oshichi, blinded by love, the man's character was unsuspected and one day, being in a mood to unbosom herself on the one great subject of her secret thoughts, she said, "My only hope in this world is to see my Sahei once more. Is there no means, my dear Kichisaburo, by which I could see him?"

The crafty knave feigned to be deeply meditating ways and means of attaining such an end, and as if struck by inspiration he suddenly exclaimed, "Here it is! Here it is!"

"What is here?" she asked, alarmed.

"Here is a good means—a capital idea! Set fire to your house," he whispered, "and the family again will remove to the Enyoji. This is the way you can see your lover."

Awestruck at first Oshichi fell a victim to the man's wicked wiles. She was young and ardent, and when he failed, in her eager wish for some other course, to suggest one, her determination was already made.

The villain's object in this proposal was loot—in the confusion caused by the fire, he would fish profitably in the troubled waters.

. . . . . .

That day the wind blew fresh and strong, and with night it rose. Fires and the short temper of the people are still known as the Flowers of Yedo. In those days, fire was never so frequent as in the Shogun's capital, as, certainly, men of no other place were so quick to pick a quarrel. A fire on such a night as that following the plot between Kichisaburo and his victim might easily prove a disaster to the whole city.

The weather conditions put everyone on the alert against the common enemy—the watchmen in their tall towers particularly. And soon the dreaded fire-bells were heard, and human waves, with the reddening sky, headed for one particular quarter of Hongo. Thousands were gathered in the neighbourhood of the house and shop of Tarobei the yaoya.

Before daybreak, Oiwake-cho lay a smouldering black plain.

In the very midst of the confusion of the night, a man, his face covered with a cloth, on his back a large and heavy bundle, stole through the crowd, and went quickly away.

His movements and suspicious bearing were observed by Nakayama Kageyu, a detective on duty for the night. Nakayama ordered a subordinate to follow the fugitive.

An official investigation (always undertaken after a fire) showed that the disastrous outbreak originated in the house of Yamase Tarobei, the yaoya. It was agreed that incendiarism had been committed, but who was the guilty party remained to be discovered. Much trembling, much uneasiness, reigned in Oiwake-cho as the officials went among the people.

And Oshichi: her crime had been the crime of the lovelorn, the bereft. She had acted on impulse, under the influence of a wicked counsellor. Now she realized the enormity of her offence, and well she knew the punishment that would follow discovery.

. . . . . .

A suspicious-looking man, carrying a large bundle, was arrested on the edge of the fire area, as he was hastening away. It was clear to those who examined the rich contents of the bundle that the property was stolen, and on him fell the much graver charge—he was suspected of being the incendiary. He was brought before the court, but professed his innocence. He was tortured, as under the Tokugawa laws all could be, and in his pain alleged that the

incendiary was none other than Oshichi Yaoya. It seemed incomprehensible that such could be the fact, but Kichisaburo persisted in his story. The detective Kageyu Nakayama, and indeed the whole court, were amazed at the confession, but believed it to be false, and intended to cover the confessor's crime.

Oshichi was summoned to give evidence. To her, immediate death would be a boon. The love lost girl confessed openly and without hesitation, and pleaded to be condemned, according to the law. Never was so beautiful and yet so piteous a supplicant.

Men and women, the whole population, were surprised and horrified, and means of saving Oshichi would be concerted, but the law must be enforced.

Among the chief retainers of the Shogunate was Dai-Onosuke, an upright and influential official of the Tokugawa Court. He called to his presence Nakayama the detective and said, "Is she really only sixteen years of age? The criminal code must not be applied in such a case. The tender maiden must not be burned at the stake in the tranquil reign of our lord. Examine her more closely, and if it is found she was under sixteen years of age on the day of the fire, even by one day, she shall be saved."

The instruction was given in a slow and insinuating way, and the detective understood. At Oshichi's trial, the detective suggested to her that she looked much younger than sixteen. Was she not fifteen? The wily detective expected the sophisticated answer, but the maiden could not be moved from the truth: "No, I am sixteen," she said.

There was no system of census registration in those days, and accordingly, no way of obtaining actual proof of age. Had Oshichi replied "Yes" to the detective's question, her life would have been saved.

"You cannot be sixteen," persisted the detective, "you are excited. Be calm, and confess you are under sixteen." The judge, who knew the drift of matters, was at a loss what to do, when the villain Kichisaburo, in court as a witness, interposed, and said:

"Oshichi must be sixteen. The proof is this: The inscription on a picture she dedicated to the Kannoji at Yannaka reads: 'This is dedicated by Oshichi, eleven years, in the 4th year of Enho.' This year she must be sixteen."

The picture was produced before the court, and it was inscribed as stated by Kichisaburo. He was condemned as the instigator, and sought to take Oshichi with him to the land of the shadow. The thoughtful device of the officials to save Oshichi proved ineffective (for the law must be obeyed), and she was burned at the stake with her awful accomplice at Suzugamori, the famous, or infamous, execution ground in Tokugawa times, situated to the south of the capital.

The maiden's transparent honesty, which shone more brightly by comparison with the villainy of her accomplice endeared her memory in the hearts of the people of Yedo. Her parents soon followed her to the grave.

. . . . . .

Sahei, immured in his temple, had recovered from a long illness, and daily waited for letters that never came. Ordinarily, no message came from the outside world, and one day, Sahei, anxious and low-spirited, ventured out. He wandered far, his steps taking him to a cemetery behind a temple, and here, still brooding, he was startled to see inscribed on a piece of wood the name he loved so well. It was placed on a newly-made grave. He read and reread the inscription on the humble tomb. He forgot everything—he doubted his senses. Summoning all his strength he asked of people at the spot the history of the entombed, and they not knowing with whom they were talking, told of the terrible fate of Oshichi. Sahei, who had served the temple with the object of acquiring knowledge and not taking orders, took the vows soon after, and served Buddha, remaining forever the true lover of Oshichi.

WINNING WITHOUT HANDS

One of the greatest masters in swordsmanship during the feudal days was Tsukuhara Bokuden. His far-famed name brought him pupils in his art from every part of the Empire, and no one dare face him in fencing match or duel.

On a certain day the famous master had occasion to cross Lake Biwa on a ferry boat crowded with passengers from the surrounding districts, all of whom were merchants with the exception of a young samurai. After the boat had got under way nothing happened to break the buzz of desultory conversation till one of the merchants accidentally trod upon the end of the young samurai's sword. The youth, who regarded his fellow-passengers with supreme contempt as belonging to a despised class, became greatly enraged, poured out the vials of his wrath upon the offender and demanded reparation for his daring to insult a samurai by treading on his soul. So great an offence, the youth declared, could only be atoned for by the life of the wretch.

The man fell upon his knees in terror before the samurai and pleaded for pardon. The offence was purely accidental, he entreated, owing to the crowded

condition of the boat, the other passengers joining in and interceding for the poor man. The samurai refused to be thus appeased and laid his hand on the hilt of his sword.

Bokuden who had been looking on in silence, could not longer refrain from coming forward.

"It was, as you well know, only an accident on the part of the merchant," Bokuden insisted. "He had no intention either of insult or discourtesy in happening to stumble against your sword. It would be only ungentlemanly on your part not to forgive him, especially since he has been so profuse in his apologies."

But the youth would listen to no reason and only became more furious in his attitude, and said that if Bokuden did not stop meddling he would have a duel on his hands, since the latter also was a samurai, and guilty of taking the part of a merchant.

Bokuden replied calmly that if necessary he was ready to defend his honour, but proposed that the contest should be postponed until landing, as it would be very inconvenient to fight on a crowded ferry boat, and certainly would seriously discommode the passengers. The youth acquiesced and at once began to make preparation by shortening his *hakama*, or divided skirt. Meanwhile he kept on using most insolent language and declaring that the school of swordsmanship to which he belonged was known as the "Invincible" (*Mutekiriu*) and condescended to inquire what school Bokuden hailed from. The great fencing master quietly replied that he was from the school they call "Winning without Hands"

(Mutekaehiriu). The young samurai took the remark as but one more insult to be avenged and declared that he would wait no longer, but would have the ferryman land them on the nearest shore.

The boat was just then in the middle of the lake and the only land in sight was a small island; and to this uninhabited place the samurai ordered the boatman to proceed. The passengers were in terror as to what might happen, but Bokuden was apparently cool and unperturbed.

As soon as the bow of the boat grounded on the sand the raving youth leaped ashore and proceeded to get ready for the demolition of his antagonist. As he called out to Bokuden to follow him in haste, the great fencing master simply picked up a pole and pushed the boat off the bank into deep water, at the same time, commanding the boatman to set to their oars and proceed upon their way, which they at once did.

For a moment the mad youth on the shore could not believe his eyes; but when he realized that he had been defeated without hands, his feelings can be better imagined than described. He hurled his denunciations after the departing crew, but they fell harmlessly on the unoffending air. As the noise of the imprecations died away in the distance Bokuden remarked to those about him, "I am not such a fool as to meet swords with a scapegrace like that. The sword is a fine weapon; it is the soul of a samurai, but its best victories are won without laying a hand on it."

The passengers were loud in their admiration of one who could turn what appeared certain death for some one, into a bloodless victory. His name from this time became more famous than ever, and his thousands of pupils from every part of the country adopted his principles, and began to regard the best triumphs those won without actual fighting, a spirit truly in accord with *bushido*, the soul of Japan.

MECCA OF THE PILGRIM

The Story of Kato Sayemon and Ishidomaru

By T. Monoo

On Mount Koya, in the province of Kii, there are still to be found the ruins of the ancient monastery called Karukaya-do, which was the place of retirement of Kato Sayemon Shigeuji. A story famous among the Japanese is told about his constancy to his oath in stifling all paternal emotions. Japanese history abounds in such stories, which are important as revealing the peculiar emotionalism of the people.

Kato Sayemon Shigeuji was a feudal lord in Kyushu, his territory extending over six provinces—Chikuzen, Chikugo, Hizen, Higo, Osumi and Satsuma. The period is the age of the Minamoto Yoriiye, the Shogun, Kamakura being the Shogun's capital. Kato Sayemon was a wise and benevolent ruler and was loved by his people. He, as did many daimio, kept a concubine; her name was Isohagi. His legal wife, Iwafune, and the concubine, Isohagi, were great friends, and the lord's domestic establishment was regarded as being a truly happy one. There was not even the slightest sign of what

is commonly known as "family troubles" among the daimio families—the daimio being all polygamists. One night in the early spring of the first year of Kennin (1201) when his body guard were asleep Sayemon recognized two hideous snakes in combat, they being reflected on the silken screen of his wife's room. Horror-stricken, he approached the screen and saw that the fighting snakes were projecting from the bosoms of two women, sitting face to face. They were twisting, curling and biting each other, with flames issuing from their mouths. Sayemon peeped into the room, and found that his wife and concubine were asleep. They appeared to have fallen asleep as they were playing cards. From this fact, they must have seemed very friendly, but Sayemon interpreted the hideous apparition as a manifestation of their secret jealousy. He had never dreamed that he was fostering two spiritual snakes in angelic forms, and this revelation marked the beginning of his religious devotion.

Kato Sayemon felt his sins would kill him, and he resolved on a new course in life. Without opening the screen he returned to his bed, but he lay awake and in meditation the rest of the night.

Morning dawned, the morning of his renunciation of the world. He called to his brother, Shigemitsu, and communicated his determination, asking Shigemitsu to succeed to the family name. The latter was astonished at this abrupt proposition and remonstrated, the chief retainers joining in the remonstrance. But Sayemon's resolution was not easily

moved, and at last the brother was compelled to succeed to the name of Kato. Now Sayemon, who had been one of the greatest feudal lords in the country but the day before, became a mere monk. He left his castle and palace which were dazzling and adamantine, and was now a mere itinerant pilgrim who had no place to rest. He was like a drifting boat, moving today to the east and tomorrow to the west. Sometimes he had to take shelter under a tree, and sometimes on the sands under a bridge. But yesterday hundreds of thousands of warriors had bowed down at his command; today he had to beg from an old washerwoman by the riverside.

This complete change had come through his perfect understanding of the Buddhist doctrine, "Lust is a mere empty thing." By lust he destroyed two souls,—the souls of fair and virtuous women, by lust he committed the sins for the remission of which he now resigned himself to the way of Buddha.

The new Lord had been asked by his brother, Sayemon, to take care of his wife, Iwafune, and his concubine, Isohagi, both of whom now came to be real friends, not only in mere outward demeanour but from their inmost hearts. By Sayemon's resignation the souls of both of these two women were saved, and they were now overwhelmed by repentance for sins committed. Isohagi had conceived the seed of Sayemon, and in due season a beautiful baby boy was born. It was named Ishido, and the boy was known as Ishidomaru. He grew up a strong boy, filial and brave, intelligent, a worthy son of such a father.

Though he was brought up as if an orphan his affection for his missing father was not dead, and night and day he and his mother waited for Sayemon's return.

Thirteen springs had come and gone, and Ishidomaru was now in his fourteenth year, still no news of his father. Early in the spring of that year the boy learned of the priest's whereabouts—he was in Mount Koya under the name of Karukaya Doshin, devoting himself to Buddhist learning. Delighted, he informed his mother of the good news, and she was no less anxious to see her old lord. No time was lost in making preparation for the journey. From the far end of Kyushu to Mount Koya, the journey in those days was a formidable one; more difficult than that between the two hemispheres in the present day.

After braving many perils and much privation mother and son arrived at an inn in the village named Kamuro which lay at the foot of the sacred Mount Koya. The setting sun threw its rays among the thick woods of the sacred mountain. The cawing of the crows sounded in melancholy note, and the temple bells resounded in pathetic and heart-moving vibration. Mother and son stayed the night at the inn—their long-cherished desire was to be gratified the next day. The inn-keeper, a kind-hearted man, overhearing their conversations, on the delight of meeting husband and father, thought within himself: "This lady and lad are yearning to see a husband and father but she cannot satisfy her desire." Since

Mount Koya was first known to the people as sacred —in October in the 7th year of Konin, by the great priest Kobo Daishi, no woman had been allowed to tread its summit. To this day we find a small building called the "Nyonin-do" (Women's temple) near the summit, which was the highest limit for women to ascend. Beyond that even an empress or princess could not go. This regulation remained strictly observed until the time of the Meiji Restoration. The innkeeper thus informed mother and son:

"My honourable guests, allow me to give you some information about the regulation of this mountain. From what I have overheard, for which I must beg your pardon, it seems that you are not of common rank. May I ask where you come from?"

The widow Isohagi replied: "We are come from Tsukushi, in Kyushu, to make inquiry of one who is devoting himself to the service of Buddha. You know of a monk, formerly the Daimio of Tsukushi, Kato Sayemon Shigeuji?"

The innkeeper was puzzled and said: "It is hard to understand. The number of the monasteries is over 900, and there are countless former samurai, daimio and even princes among the monks, who have sought refuge here in this holy mountain renouncing worldly cares and resigning themselves to the service of Buddha. And even if the whereabouts of the man in your heart was ascertained, I am exceedingly sorry to say, it is quite impossible for you to meet him. This mountain is strictly prohibited to women, who cannot ascend to the summit."

The effect of his words made the kind keeper think it would have been better not to say anything, but Isohagi must have learned it sooner or later, he reflected.

If the mother could not go Ishido could, and early the next morning he bade farewell, and neither mother nor son dreamed that they were parting for all time. Through the twilight woods Ishidomaru hurried on his ascending way.

The whole surface of the mountain was covered with stately woods. It was 405 years after Kobo Daishi had consecrated it; countless souls had been saved from worldly sins in that holy precinct.

Ishidomaru climbed the Oshiage Rocks, passed the Sanko Pinetree or Gokocryptomeria, and then came into view a vast number of temples and monasteries. The glorious setting sun was fast disappearing; the temple bells were tolling in deep harmonious sound. All was peace. Ishidomaru passed the night under the eaves of a temple. The sounds of chirping insects, the passing breeze, the musical droning of the priests reading the scriptures accompanied by the tinkling of bells—in such a place sleep was impossible. The next morning Ishido continued in quest of his father but no clue was found. For three days he kept up a dogged search, but all in vain. By this time something in his heart told him to go back to his mother; he resolved to give up the search for his father and return.

When he approached the bridge called Munyo, coming toward him was a monk reciting the holy

texts, with beads in his right hand and flowers in his left. Ishido was pleased, and in the innocence of youth said:—

"May I ask you, most reverend Sir, if you can tell me the whereabouts of the monk who was formerly the Daimio of Tsukushi?"

The monk was startled and then amazed, his amazement grew deeper and deeper when he realized that a youth was loitering alone in the thick forest in the twilight, and, again, when he caught sight of the sword girded to his slight form. Scabbard, hilt, guard, and cords, everything was identical with the sword he himself had received from the Lord of Kamakura in the glorious days when he was the Daimio of Tsukushi.

The monk was none other than the father of Ishidomaru.

Karukaya Doshin, formerly Kato Sayemon, was awestruck within himself and his natural emotions were near to bursting out unrestrained. He would have embraced his son, Ishidomaru, and revealed himself, but he controlled all natural instincts, remembering the solemn oath taken when he entered into Buddha's service.

"To forsake all and every kind of tie relating to the flesh and to enter into Nirvana" was the sacred oath he swore, and Kato Sayemon feigning the utmost calmness spoke:—

"I do not know where you are come from, but it will be impossible for you to come across the man you look for. In this broad mountain there are

countless numbers of Buddhist devotees who were formerly samurai or daimio, not only from Kyushu but also from every part of Japan. Unless you have some more definite clue your labour will be all in vain. Come with me to my monastery, and I will give you all the help I can." In a few steps they came to the dwelling of Karukaya Doshin. He first offered the flowers he had carried to the Buddha's image and, after having recited the holy sutras, listened slowly as the boy told his story; bitterly Kato Sayemon recalled the past. He was buried from the world, but his living self was seen in the beautiful lad, Ishidomaru. But it was his tragic role to dissemble before his own son. Gravely and in inward trembling he announced the death of Kato Sayemon. The boy begged to know where his father was buried.

Karukaya Doshin took Ishidomaru into the grove and pointing out a tomb at random, said this was his father's resting place. The tomb was mossy and weather beaten and the inscription illegible.

Ishidomaru prostrated himself before the tomb and joining his slender hands—so slender and delicate, to use the Japanese expression, hands as the maple leaves, he prayed for the consolation of the departed soul.

The pathetic sight, his own son's grief and heart-breaking words of prayer broke Karukaya Doshin in his stoic determination. He wept bitterly with his son; the tears flowed down his face. Ishidomaru saw how sorrowful was the priest—he saw more, and said:

"My mother told me that the only clue in the search of my father was a mole on his left eyebrow. You are so marked. Reveal yourself to me!" Karukaya, twice, three times, determined to tell the truth, but as often remained true to his oath to Buddha. Again he lied.

"You are a very clever boy. There are many people who have moles on their left eyebrows. My sympathy has aroused your suspicion.

"Kato Sayemon Shigeuji, who died last year also had a mole in exactly the same place. You cannot meet a dead man in this world. Such grief and sorrow on your part and your mother's are natural but the waste of sorrow and grief alone will never console the departed. Go home and do service to the spirit in another world."

Again Ishidomaru burst into tears.

"Do not weep," said the priest. "When you left home at Tsukushi, somebody, either a relative or mother must have come with you?"

"Yes, my mother has come with me. But the law of this sacred mountain does not permit her to come up. She is waiting for me to bring my father at an inn below."

"That is good. Though your father is dead you have fortunately a mother. Go down at once and inform her of your father's death. Go home with your mother and say mass for the dead. It is near sunset and twilight will soon be gathered."

What were the feelings of Karukaya as he allowed his son to go?

When father and son were out of sight of each other, Ishidomaru hastened down with a view to consulting his mother. But misfortune never comes alone. Isohagi, ill and broken-hearted, was dead. Ishidomaru met this new and cruel fate. He held on to his mother's body and wailed and wept. The kind-hearted innkeeper and others were no less affected . . . but Ishidomaru was a samurai.

Now the only one in the world for him to turn to for help was his elder sister in Tsukushi. Gathering the things which he could keep as mementoes of his mother he hastened away to his distant home. All things are transitory and human life is but an empty dream. It is like the dewdrop which disappears before the morning sun, or the delicate cherry blossom. Did not Shinran himself write:—

Asu ari to
  Omokokoro no
Adazakura
  Yowa ni arashi no
Fukanu monoka wa.

(How indiscreet art thou, the cherry blossom, to rely upon tomorrow! Knowest thou not that the storm may come and take thee away tonight?)

Ishidomaru found his elder sister—a beautiful maiden, waiting news of her father which her mother and young brother would bring—dead. Sickness had overtaken her, but it was the storm that was to destroy the beautiful flower. Now, all human life appeared to Ishidomaru indeed but a dream and his

childish mind was in despair. The only way, it seemed to him, was to follow the departed souls and join them in the underworld. How often had he determined to start on the shadowy journey! But he was a samurai boy. He had a precious sword, which he girded on, inherited by his father. He could die by hara kiri in the brave samurai method.

He was on the point of death when his suspicions of his father revived. He determined to appeal once more to the kind-hearted monk, and in case he would not reveal himself as his father he also would shave his head and ask to be made his disciple. He would console the departed souls by serving Buddha. Thereupon he again started for Koyasan.

Once again amid the thick woods; the deep silence broken only by the hooting of the owl, while the singing of the Buddha birds put him to meditation. A step further up found himself at the monastery where he had met the monk of a few months before. A solemn voice reading the sutra penetrated his ear, and the voice was that which sounded pleasantly and sadly on the last occasion. He peeped into the interior of the monastery; the reader was alone in the cloister. Deeply absorbed, the recluse paid no attention to whomsoever was outside. Ishidomaru knocked at the door over and over again. At last the reading stopped and he was asked who he was. But it was hard to tell his name. At the first glance the priest spoke: "What has brought you here?" Ishidomaru told his tragic story, and concluded:

"Now I am entirely alone, and my wish is to de-

vote my life to Buddha and console departed souls. Since I first saw you, I cannot believe that you are not my father. If you cannot reveal yourself or my suspicion is wrong, allow me to be a disciple and let me live here with you."

Kato Sayemon, moved to the depths, could not reject his son's plea, but he would not reveal himself.

Ishidomaru became a young recluse and acolyte. He was devoted night and day to the study of Buddhism; he drew water or gathered fagots and his father boiled the rice. The life of the master and disciple was as intimate as that of father and son. The years rolled on and they attained to deep enlightenment.

They left Koya mountain on a pilgrimage throughout the whole country, visiting many sacred places. "The years hurried onward, treading in their haste on one another's heels."

They chose their dwelling at the famous temple called Zenkoji in Shinano province, still devoting their lives to Buddha's service. Karukaya Doshin was now an old man and his disciple Ishidomaru was in his manhood; still the former retained his secret. But the day of death approached, and with his last breath Kato Sayemon revealed himself to his son.

The story of Kato Sayemon and Ishidomaru has engraved itself on the mind of the people, and the Ishido-dera (Temple of Ishido) at the Zenkoji enshrines the Oyako-jizo (parent and child) which is today as it has been for hundreds of years past the mecca of many a pilgrim.

OOKA AS A MATCHMAKER

Translated by T. Monoo

A fancy goods dealer named Jinshiro lived at Gorobei-cho, in the Kyobashi district of Yedo. He was not well off, but thrifty, and he and his wife having no children, were able to make ends meet; further, they were liked by all who knew them.

With the object of laying in a new stock of goods, Jinshiro started on a long journey to Kamigata, as the Osaka and Kyoto district is called even today by Tokyo people. On his way along the Tokaido, he reached the Hakone mountains, where he met a man stark naked, shivering with cold, his strength quite exhausted. He explained that he had come from Yedo to enjoy the hot springs of Hakone, and was taking a walk when some highwaymen appeared and stripped him of his clothes and money. His name (he told Jinshiro) was Shirobei; he was a fancy goods dealer, and lived in Bizen-cho, of the Sakurada district in Yedo.

A proverb says that two men of a trade can never be on good terms, and that even a beggar is envied by another beggar. Shirobei and Jinshiro were of

the same trade, but under the circumstances all rivalries were forgotten. Jinshiro took some warm clothing from the pack that he was carrying on his back, and opening his purse gave the unfortunate wayfarer three bu, which is a small amount today, but at that time was a considerable sum and quite sufficient to meet Shirobei's pressing needs.

Shirobei felt as though his life had been saved, and promised to meet his benefactor in Yedo and return his favour. Then Shirobei asked for Jinshiro's address, and the latter taking out a writing brush from his yatate, or pen and ink case, wrote it out. Seeing that Jinshiro had a very large money bag and that his own, which the robbers had left behind on the highway was in better condition than that of his new found friend, Shirobei offered it as a slight token of his thanks. Jinshiro gladly accepted the gift, and handed over his old purse, in which he had written his address, which read: "Jinshiro, Gorobei-cho, Kyobashi, Yedo, the landlord being Kichibei."

So Jinshiro went on his way, and Shirobei returned to his inn. A few days after his encounter with the highwaymen he fell ill, probably from the exposure, and died suddenly. The innkeeper was at a loss how to identify his departed guest since he had not registered upon his arrival. But on examination of his clothing the supposed address was found in his purse.

A messenger was sent to Yedo, and Jinshiro's wife received a great shock when told that her husband was dead. She went at once to Kichibei, their land-

lord, and asked him what to do. Kichibei decided that he and one Hompachi should go to Hakone. When they arrived at the place, the man had been dead for some time, and it was difficult to identify him, although they both thought the body was larger than Jinshiro's ought to be. They were also surprised to find that his money bag contained only three bu, for they knew he was going to Osaka and Kyoto on business, and should have had a larger amount on his person. But Jinshiro's purse was considered a certain clue. The body was therefore cremated and the ashes carried back to Yedo. Funeral services were held, and a tablet to the dead was placed in the butsudan of Jinshiro's household.

The work of carrying on her late husband's business was too much for the widow. Kichibei advised her to marry again, and picked out Jinshiro's cousin, Tsunekichi. He was well trained in the fancy goods business. The widow hesitated to accept this advice since she was afraid of the gossips of the neighbourhood. She was also afraid that a hasty marriage would not please the spirit of the late Jinshiro, and asked them to wait until the customary hundred days had passed; until the period of mourning was at an end.

But Kichibei persisted. He told her that the best way to please the soul of the departed was to keep the business running smoothly. She admitted that Tsunekichi would make an ideal husband, and had a strong affection for him, but she still hesitated. The more she demurred the more they urged Tsunekichi's

suit, until their advice grew into a kind of persecution.

The widow was at last obliged to yield; the marriage ceremony was duly performed, and the household went on as before. The days passed rapidly, and the hundredth day anniversary came around. The wife of Tsunekichi observed the customary service for the dead with all due respect. After the ceremony Tsunekichi left home on business, and at the close of the day she waited for the return of her new husband.

Footsteps were heard and a happy voice exclaimed: "Here I am at last! How do you do, my dear!" The door opened, and there stood Jinshiro. With a shriek the terrified woman dashed out of the house by the back door. To Jinshiro this was indeed a strange welcome after his long absence from home. Taking off his straw sandals, he entered his house and found many changes.

The wife, now possessed of two husbands, ran to Kichibei's house. Almost fainting from the fright and barefooted, she ran screaming to Kichibei: "A ghost! A ghost!" Kichibei was not alarmed at a little thing like a ghost, and reproved her, saying that as it was a hundred days since her first husband's death she must have been thinking of him, and the ghost was nothing but her own imagination at work.

She entreated him to return with her, saying that Jinshiro had a pack on his shoulder and straw sandals on his feet. At last he was persuaded to go.

Jinshiro, sitting by a hibachi smoking a pipe, caught sight of Kichibei and addressed him, and soon explanations were made on both sides that cleared up the mystery.

As it was Jinshiro's disposition to think of others' misfortunes before his own, he suddenly thought of the family of Shirobei and hurried off to Bizen-cho in Sakurada. He found a large and prosperous shop, and was spoken to by two clerks. He found Shirobei's wife was beautiful and young. He informed her of her husband's death; how he had met him in the mountains, and she was overwhelmed by the tragic news, as she had been growing more and more anxious as the days lengthened out and he did not return.

While they were thus engaged, the wife's brother joined them. He took Jinshiro for an impostor and secretly informed the rough gentry of the neighbourhood so that a crowd surrounded him when he left the shop. Jinshiro was arrested on the charge of trying to pose as Shirobei.

The learned Judge Ooka held a brief preliminary examination and Jinshiro was sent to prison. Ooka had given orders for the capture of a highwayman in the Hakone district who had proved a terror to travellers. He was at last taken, and proved to be Rokuzo, the shampooer, born in Yanagi-cho, Ichigaya, another district of Yedo. He had long infested the Tokaido robbing travellers, and Jinshiro's innocence was soon established.

At last Jinshiro was a free man, but homeless, for

he was forsaken by nearest and dearest. After his acquittal, he had no place to rest his head. He was a ruined man. But the wise judge made a very good proposal. He told the widow of Shirobei that as she had no husband and that as Jinshiro had also no wife, they would make a good couple. She was not averse. Not long after Ooka was informed that his matchmaking had been crowned with success. By the marriage of Jinshiro with Shirobei's widow, the business became more prosperous, and the couple lived a happy life together.

SUNDRY GHOSTS

In the town of Fushimi, near Kyoto, there was long an ame shop called the Yurei Ameya (Ghost Ame Shop), and the name thus bestowed suggests uncanny associations.

Many years ago in this town a woman died before her child was born. As it was a time when medicine was very primitive, nothing could be done to save the child, and the mother and the little one, who had not been able to see the light of day, were buried together.

Shortly after the grave had been closed, a woman about 27 years of age visited the Yurei Ameya and bought a rin's worth of sweetmeat. The next night the same woman, looking pale and weird, appeared again for the same purpose. Since she came at the same time every night the keeper of the shop began to wonder who she was. Six nights passed and on the seventh, the ame-ya was resolved to try to find out something concerning his strange customer. She did not come until the night was far advanced, and the shop was about to be closed.

In the same town was a rich pawnbroker. He was visited late one night by an emaciated woman, who pawned her kogai, or bar for the hair. It was of

amber-coloured tortoise-shell of exquisite workmanship.

Her name and address were registered, but the pawnbroker was surprised as he watched her leave, for there was no sound of footsteps and her form seemed to float through the air. But however uncanny she may have appeared, the hair ornament was material enough, and was safely deposited.

The strange visitant to the ame-ya caused the superstitious inmates to become more and more curious. One night one of the shopmen followed her secretly. She went toward a hill and when she reached a graveyard her shape became invisible, and a tiny streak of bluish-green light blazed up but was soon extinguished. The man who had followed the woman took fright and fled. He returned to the shop greatly agitated and next day his shop-fellows went to the exact place where the spirit had been seen, and there they found a newly made grave.

The relatives of the dead were discovered, and their consent obtained to open the grave. The wailing of a babe was heard, and at last the child was seen folded in the bosom of its mother. She was no other than the woman who had frequented the ame-ya. There was even found some ame left in a porcelain cup.

Now it was clearly seen that the soul of the dead woman had taken human form and visited the shop with a one rin coin. In the funeral ritual of certain Buddhist sects six rin are buried with the dead. The idea is that the soul needs them when it passes

the Rokudo-no-tsuji (Six-road-crossing) on the journey to Paradise, in order to offer them to the image of Buddha, which is placed at each of the crossings. The soul of the dead woman could not start on her journey, and she had made use of the coins. Everybody who heard the story wept in sympathy with the departed.

There was still, however, the mystery how she had secured the further supply of ame. But this was soon forgotten, and the funeral services were again performed so that the soul could at last start on its long journey.

At the pawnbroker's shop they wondered why the woman had not come to redeem her kogai. Thinking it strange they took it to the address which had been registered. The address was that of the house where lived the relatives of the woman who had died with her unborn child. They showed the kogai to them, and it was identified as the one that had been buried with the dead because she had always treasured it. The mystery was now cleared up, and the kogai was redeemed and again restored to the coffin.

The babe that had been rescued from the grave grew up, and at the age of six was looked upon as a prodigy in learning and accomplishments. He was sent to the parish temple, in the cemetery of which his mother was buried, that he might become a disciple of the priest, there to console the soul of his mother. He would thus devote his life to the service of Buddha, and so would return in some measure the

touching affection the mother had shown towards her infant. After a year the child could recite almost all of the important sutras. At the age of 15 he had progressed so wonderfully that he was considered worthy to be placed at the head of a temple.

He was accustomed to sit alone to meditate in the main building of the temple. The priest's dwelling is usually built apart from the main building, where the service to Buddha alone is performed. At first his instructor did not notice the abstraction of the youth, and had he done so would have not suspected anything, since he was himself in the habit of practicing deep religious meditation.

It happened one night, however, that the master was near his young acolyte, although the latter was not aware of the priest's presence. The priest was surprised to hear not a recitation of the scriptures, but something which sounded very much like a conversation. Sometimes he murmured in a low tone of voice, and again his accents betrayed joy or sorrow. The words were uttered at certain intervals, which allowed someone else to speak, and thus a dialogue was being exchanged. The priest listened attentively, but could not catch any other sound save the youth's indistinct articulation. It naturally caused the old priest to think that the youth had fallen asleep during the meditation and was talking unconsciously. He did not awaken him and left him. The priest, however, found that this state occurred with frequency, and his patience at an end he was about to give the youth warning.

One day he called the acolyte to him and indirectly referred to his meditations and the strange manner he had of holding imaginary conversations. The acolyte thought he might be punished should he tell the truth, and for some time hesitated to reveal his secret. But the kind and genial countenance of the wise and holy man encouraged him.

The acolyte had been told of his history and birth, and he treasured a minute description of his mother. While still very young he had formed an imaginary picture of his unseen mother, and filled with filial piety he constantly wished to see her. Six years after he had been sent to the temple he was on the verandah in the rear to escape the great heat of summer. In the temple yard there was a thick, gloomy bamboo grove affording ample shade, and the semi were shrilly singing. Now the burning sun had set, and the grey twilight was fast gathering. The hot clamour of the semi had been superseded by the chirping of insects. No moon or stars were visible that night, but the bamboo grove was visited by the pale, glimmering fireflies. In this silent spot on such a serene night, was the place for meditation. Behind the bamboo grove there was a spacious cemetery where the people of the parish, old and young, from grandfathers down to infants, who had departed from the temporary world, reposed. The acolyte was reading the scriptures to keep himself from sleeping. A cool breeze blew, refreshing after the heat of the day.

He soon fell into meditation about his mother,

whose picture had become photographed upon his brain. He put aside his sacred book, and sat down with his eyes shut in the proper meditative attitude.

He had not been long in this posture when the tender, sweet voice of a woman called his name. He thought it strange since no woman was allowed to live in the temple. He opened his eyes and saw the figure of a woman standing in front of him. Her face was pale and thin, but she smiled lovingly and kept her eyes upon him. He was not afraid as others would have been, for he had studied spiritual things deeply, and so comported himself as one who would have said with a calm and composed air: "Are you a human being or some spirit? If a harmful spirit I must destroy you to hinder you from troubling others, but if you are innocent, I will appease you. Reveal your true nature?"

He had scarcely begun to think in the spirit of these words when he recognized that the figure before him was that of the mother whose image he had so carefully treasured. He cried out with emotion: "Are you my mother who slept in the grave before I was born, and nursed me with ame?"

"You have spoken the truth," said the woman. "After your birth I got your nourishment as you have said. When you were taken out of my grave I was allowed to go to my destination. And according to my earnest prayer you have been brought up in a way that has pleased my soul. Your daily devotion to Buddha moves me and I have been allowed to come here and see you and hold conversation with

you. Continue to grow in virtue and we shall then have the pleasure of communication often."

The young acolyte was amazed and wept for joy at having met his mother. There were tears also in the eyes of the ghostly parent.

For a long time he had hesitated to speak to the priest, but now, finding that spiritual communication with his mother, that had continued for three years ever since he was twelve years of age, had been discovered, he decided to abandon his reserve, and so related everything that had happened from the time of the first visit of the spirit to the temple.

The priest commended the filial duty of the dutiful son, which had made possible the visit of his mother, and in due time, the good man, having entered into Nirvana, his disciple, born of a ghostly mother, succeeded to the office of rector, and for many years exercised benign and great influence over the people of the surrounding country.

THE RAT BOY

Behind the Temple of the Nameless Dead in Tokyo there is a famous grave. No matter at what time of day or night the curious may chance to visit the place, the senko will be found burning. It is said that the incense has been burning without interruption since the old days when the city was called Yedo,—ever since Nezumi Kozo, or the Rat Boy, was buried there. He was a pioneer socialist, and robbed the rich to give to the poor, a Japanese Robin Hood. His memory has not been forgotten.

The day on which Nezumi Kozo gave himself up to the police was cold, and the wind, as it is in modern Tokyo, was bitter, and rioted over the grey tiled roofs of the city and through its narrow streets. But to understand the meaning of the burning incense, it is necessary to go back to this cold, windy day in Yedo some eighty years ago.

A boy of fourteen was making his way against the wind crying out to the passersby asking them to buy his shell fish. His bare feet in their wooden geta were chapped and red, his hands were numb. There was no warmth in the cotton kimono in which he was so scantily clad.

Suddenly he stopped, his attention drawn to a sign proclaiming the abode of a fortune-teller. He crossed the street and gained the entrance, where he put down his basket of shell fish and timidly called out the usual salutation: "Please excuse me."

The paper door of the entrance was drawn aside and the fortune-teller appeared, and roughly exclaimed:—

"Here I don't want any of your clams!" Then being filled with pity at the sight of the poverty-stricken lad, he added:

"You look cold and hungry. Here is a gold coin. Take it home and give it to your father and mother, and tell them to use it carefully and make it last as long as they can."

"I don't want any gold coins," replied the boy without taking the proffered riches. "If I take it I should have to go to prison. You are a fortune-teller, so perhaps you can answer my questions. I have no money to give you, but if you will kindly accept a few fish I would like you to tell my fortune."

"What!" said the fortune-teller, "you won't accept the gold but you want your fortune told! Well wipe your feet and come in and I will do my best to tell you what you wish to know. Here! here! that won't do! as the boy knelt down near the door. It is very cold, don't be bashful, come and warm yourself while we talk."

How good it seemed to the boy to find shelter from the bitter wind! He sat beside the cheerful glow in the hibachi, and the man gazed at him across the fire,

knocking the ashes from his small pipe by striking it against the metal rim of the hibachi.

"You seem young to be a street-seller? Are your parents poor?"

"Yes, sir. My father is dead, and there are only my mother and an elder sister and her husband. Until lately he was able to earn enough for our food. But mother was taken ill, and we found it impossible to buy the medicine to pay a doctor. My sister asked her husband to divorce her that she might sell herself to the Yoshiwara to obtain the money for mother's needs. While we were talking about this, a man with his face half covered with a towel so that we could not distinguish his features, opened the door and thrusting in a package, said: 'Take this to relieve your want,' and before we could thank him he hastened away in the dark, and although my brother-in-law ran after him he could not overtake him. Opening the packet we found it contained 10 gold ryo. Overjoyed, we hastened to a doctor and to buy medicine and other things for our sick mother. But our joy was short-lived. The gold coins had secret marks upon them, which proved that they had been stolen from a certain daimio and my sister and her husband have been arrested and thrown into prison, on suspicion of either having stolen them or having connection with the robber."

The fortune-teller had dropped his pipe on the matting and folded his hands in the sleeves of his kimono, and was looking intently at the boy.

"I came to ask you, sir, whether you can tell me

when my sister and her husband will be released, or what will be the end of this?"

There were tears in the eyes of the fortune-teller as he said: "I am truly sorry to hear your sad story, and now understand why you would not receive the gold coin I just now offered you. Wait a minute, and I will inquire of the future and then tell you what the oracle declares." Placing a low table before him he took a bundle of sticks of the same size and some blocks of wood. Shaking the sticks and moving the blocks of wood and going through all the acts which distinguish the fortune-teller, he turned to the boy:—

"Now go home and comfort your mother. The robber who stole those gold coins will be arrested during the day and your sister and her husband will return home. You refuse gold, but here are some coppers. They at least are not marked, and you can accept them without fear. Go home and comfort your mother and always remember to be a dutiful son."

The boy went home as quickly as he could, and before many hours had passed his sister and brother-in-law returned. At the same time the streets were filled with people talking over the latest news that Nezumi Kozo, the Rat Boy, the most famous robber of Yedo, had given himself up to justice. He had confessed all his crimes, which were many and grievous, against the rich, but never had he stolen anything from the poor. His chief aim was to steal from the rich in order to relieve the poor. The people called him the Rat Boy because of his agility, for

there seemed no fence that he could not climb, nor wall that he could not scale. There were many petitions offered praying that the Rat Boy might be pardoned, or at any rate that the death sentence be not passed upon him. Many even went so far as to offer their lives for his, praying that they might take his place if only he might be saved, according to the old custom in Japan of taking the place of a condemned man.

But there was to be no mercy for the Rat Boy. His crimes against the nobility demanded the heaviest penalty, and he was sentenced.

The day of the execution dawned, and Nezumi Kozo was bound to a horse with his arms pinioned behind him, and he was led through the streets of Yedo followed by hundreds, nay thousands, of the poorer classes. The fish boy was among them, with his sister, that they might catch a glimpse of the man who by surrendering to the authorities had saved them from imprisonment. With them were women clothed in rags, leading children by the hand, in fact the poverty-stricken classes from all quarters of the city crowded the streets praying for his repose as he was led along to the Plain of the Skull, the public execution ground.

The boy pushed and pulled in the crowd but failed to see Nezumi Kozo. He was told that when the procession reached the Plain of the Skull, the robber was removed from the horse. He knelt upon the ground, there was the flash of a sword, and his head rolled in the dust.

For three days the head of the famous robber was exposed to view. The boy with other curious people passed that way to see the last of a man so fatally connected with his own small family. He was struck speechless when he beheld the face of none other than the fortune-teller who had so truly foretold the future for him. The boy's story had so influenced the man of double life that he had given himself up.

After three days the corpse was handed over to the relations of the dead man, and he was buried in the temple sacred to the nameless dead. From that day to this the smoke of incense has been wafted on the wind, and even at present hundreds daily visit the shrine erected over the humble grave. People go to the hallowed spot and pray for good fortune in their undertakings. They offer a piece of stone, and if they are successful they break off a corner of the stone and carry this relic for good luck. In this way a high wall composed of these chipped stones now surrounds the shrine. Red lanterns hang from the eaves of the little shrine, pilgrims' banners adorn it, and the worshippers throw their money into a strong box in front of the rough memorial stone which bears the famous robber's name.

THE DOLL FLOWERS

By Ken Nakazawa

Meechan sprang from her bed at the first cock-crow, and threw on her clothes. Then she hastily gulped down her breakfast with a cup of tea, swung on her flower basket, and rushed out of her cottage.

Through the sleeping streets she ran, and knocked at the florist's.

The florist came out, rubbing his eyes, and stared at her in amazement. "Why, neisan," he cried almost reproachfully, "it is hardly day yet!"

"I know!" Meechan retorted, "but I must start early today. You know why—have you forgotten?"

"Oh, yes!" the old man slapped his thigh, "I clean forgot! This is the day you buy a doll."

"Yes! I shall have about one yen and fifty sen to spend when I finish my business today. That will buy an American doll—a real American doll!"

She was really too old to play with dolls, being thirteen, but she was lonely, having no family or friends. She simply had to have something to fill the empty place in her heart. So, she had been saving for these many months, and was now going to invest the money from a part of her earnings.

"Mah, mah!" the florist ejaculated, "is it not great! I presume it will be a large one."

"No, not very," Meechan sighed, "large ones will cost from five to ten yen. I wish I could buy one of them. They are wonderful!—Just like a live baby. It even cries when you lay it down. But, I can't, I have only one yen and fifty sen." She dropped her eyes on her toes, which were peeping from the holes of her tabi, and was silent.

The gloom, however passed away almost as fast as it had come. The light again filled her large wistful eyes. "But I do not care!" she laughed. "It is an American doll just the same. It has a head like corn tassel and a face like a peony; and it goes to sleep when you lay it down. Oh, it is such a sweet little thing!"

She folded her arms as if the doll were already there. Then she laughed and grasped the florist by the sleeve, "Now, ojisan, you must hurry and give me some flowers!"

Almost buried under the load of chrysanthemums, she left the florist, and hurried to the streets, where spires rose high into the brightening sky, and bamboo glistened against the rising sun. There she slackened her gait, and began to call "Hana–ee—hana–ee (flowers!—flowers!)," her clear voice blending into the misty morning air.

Business was unusually good that day, and by noon she had sold all her regular stock. She needed but to sell the remaining flowers—the doll flowers,—and the world would be hers! With a song in her

heart she bought some rice cake, and went into the yard of an old temple. She unloaded, seated herself upon a stone, and began to munch, stopping now and then to think of the doll she would get.

"Moshi, moshi, neisan!" a timid voice called from behind, "can you sell me some flowers?"

Meechan dropped her cake into the bag, quickly wiped her mouth on her sleeve, and turned. A thin, tired-looking woman was standing behind her. Her hair was white, though she seemed scarcely over thirty, and in spite of the cheap calico she wore, there was an air of genteelness about her spare figure, and in her deeply wrinkled face. She wore mourning on her sleeve, and by some unaccountable reason, seemed very remote.

Meechan flashed to her feet. "Yes, Obasan, for how much?"

"I need very, very little," the woman smiled apologetically, "only about two sen's worth. Can you sell even so little?"

Meechan hesitated. She never sold for less than five sen—in fact, most of the flowers were three to five sen apiece. But, somehow—perhaps, the fact that she had something of her mother about her—she could not say it. "There will not be very many," she said at last, "but, I think I can give you some."

"Oh, will you?" the woman said, much relieved, "I am so grateful. I would buy yens and yens of them, but the time is hard—my girl must be satisfied with what two sen can buy."

The words, "My girl," aroused Meechan's curi-

osity. Selecting flowers she asked, "Oh, these are for your daughter, then?"

"Yes, for my daughter." The voice was strangely hollow, and looking up, Meechan caught something sadder, and more heart-rending than tears in the eyes of the woman. Meechan looked down and wondered what it could mean. Then, slowly to her mind came the memory of a few years before, when her younger sister had died. Her mother had not cried, but had gone about like this woman, quiet and remote—seeming the shadow of herself. She had neither eaten, nor slept, unless forced; and had spent all her days talking to the grave, and buying flowers for it. "Perhaps, she, too, has lost her daughter," she thought, and being naturally agile of mind, and full of sympathy, she added a generous handful of large flowers.

"Why, neisan!" the woman protested, "you are making a mistake—I need only for two sen."

"That is all right," Meechan reassured her, "I shall never be able to sell all these flowers, and tomorrow they are not fit to market. But—Obasan—your—daughter—where——"

"She—she lies there at the back of the temple. She died three seven days ago" (twenty-one days—the Buddhist way of reckoning).

Suddenly as if her legs had given away, the woman sank upon the stone, and fixed her dry, blue-rimmed eyes on the gilded crimson of the temple.

Torn with sympathy, Meechan laid a hand in the mother's lap, and tried to comfort. But, somehow,

the words did not come, and soon she found herself crying.

The mother took Meechan in her arms, and gazed upon her. "She was about your age, neisan," she said. "What is your name?"

"Miya," Meechan answered sniffling, "Meechan."

"Miya? Fine name! Hers was Kaya-Kaachan. Do you not think it is also a fine name?

"But she was better than her name. You have never seen a girl like her—so bright and so good, and always so considerate of her mother. Sometimes she was so good that it made me cry. You see we were not born poor. We once lived in Ushigome, and were very rich. At that time we had a large garden about our home, and it was full of flowers—cherries, peonies, wistaria, chrysanthemums. These flowers were each a baby for Kaachan. She was a peculiar child, and loved flowers above anything else. She cared for them as a mother might for her child, and allowed no one to touch them without her permission. One day there was a thunder-storm and many of the flowers were blown down; and the cry she had that night! One might have thought it was her mother whom she was mourning.

"But, misfortune came to us three years ago. Kaachan's father died, and things began to turn against us. In a little while, we were compelled to sell the house and move out. Kaachan had to part with her flowers, and go to where there is not an inch of garden. Poor girl! How hard it must have been. Still, when I told her, she put her arms around my

neck, and said I should not worry, because she would soon be a big girl, and then would buy me a bigger house. Such a girl she was! Bright and good and always thoughtful. Perhaps, that is why she died so young—she was too good for this world—!" Her voice slightly trembled, trailed off, and there was a long silence. Fingering her flowers Meechan thought how hard it must have been to have lost a girl like her.

Presently the woman shook her head as if to dispel a gloomy thought, and rose. "But, no matter now," she muttered, "she is dead! Nothing can bring her back!" Then, turning to Meechan, "I am sorry that I kept you so long. Will you give me the flowers?"

Meechan did not answer for a while. Then, "Obasan, will you take me to her grave? I want to worship it."

"I do not know," the elder pondered a while. "Perhaps I might, though it is very small and poor—not at all like the ones given to the others of our family."

She led the child through the temple yard into the burial place. The grave stood in a pretentious family corner, amid the ponderous monuments of granite and limestone. It was a small sandstone affair, in tragic contrast with the other tombstones; but the ground about it was clean and finely grained as a heap of black sugar, and already some shy leaves of flowers were peeping out.

The woman took off the wild flowers she had in a bamboo vase by the monument, put the chrysanthe-

mums in their place, then both the young and old clasped their hands before them, and sank into prayer.

Finally the woman looked up and spoke to the grave: "See, Kaachan, chrysanthemums! Are they not beautiful? You used to make a wreath with them, do you remember? White and yellow and blue! Some day, when I have more money, I will buy you one just like that—yes, I will buy one every day. But you are glad to have these flowers today, are you not—are you not, Kaachan?"

Meechan watched her a while, then suddenly became restless. She took out all her flowers from the basket, then put them back, then again she took them out, and again put them back. At last, with a great decision, she spoke, "Obasan will make her a wreath, I have enough varieties to make a fine one."

The woman turned to her. "I would like very much to have you," she replied, "but, I can not afford it—I have no money."

"I need no money—I am doing it for Kaachan."

"You dear girl!" The woman threw her arm around Meechan. "But it is too much. Those flowers would cost at least a yen or two. I can not let you waste them. I thank you very much, but Kaachan has enough flowers now."

"But I will make the wreath," Meechan persisted, beginning to assort the flowers, "I was going to spend that one yen and fifty sen, anyway. I was going to buy a doll."

"A doll?"

"Yes, there is a small American doll I can have for that much, and I was going to buy it."

Suddenly the thought that she was too big to play with dolls coming to her, she explained, "But I am so lonely. I am an orphan, and live all by myself. I have no one to talk to—nothing to play with—I had to have something."

The woman took Meechan on her lap, and looked into her eyes. "Do you mean to say," she asked, breathlessly, "that you are living alone—all alone?"

Meechan nodded, with a sigh.

"You poor girl! Of course you need something to keep you company. By all means you must keep these flowers and buy the doll."

"But, I do not want it now. I am too big for it anyway—and besides, if I happen to need it again, I can save." She laid the flowers she had selected across her knees, and began to size them.

The woman watched her for a few minutes. Suddenly her face lighted up, and she arose. "I have just remembered that I had something to do at this hour," she said. "I may be gone for some time, but stay till I return. It will take some time to finish the wreath—will it not?" And she hurried away.

Meechan worked on. She sized and combined the flowers, then began to weave, giving particular emphasis to the white, the yellow and the blue. She no longer thought of the doll she was not to have, but of the joy of the girl in gokuraku (heaven), and her mother. She was very happy, and soon a song burst through her lips.

At last the wreath was ready. She held it up, and turning it, admired it from all sides. A cry of great satisfaction escaped her. Never before in her life had she woven a wreath of such marvellous beauty. The ones she had made before had been the collection of third-grade varieties with a few good ones mixed. But, this one was made of all good flowers, and the love with which she had woven it was manifest in every knot, every twist. It shone there in the sunlight, like the gorgeous brocade head-dress of the traditional Star Princess.

Meechan got up and danced with it, then placed it upon the monument; then standing away a few steps, feasted her eyes upon its beauty. "Now, Kaachan!" she cried, feeling as though she were an old friend of hers, "you are glad, are you not? I will give you something like this as often as I can. I will also see that you have fresh flowers every time I pass here. You are happy, are you not?"

Then the mother returned with something done in paper under her arm. Catching sight of the wreath, she tried to speak, choked, crushed Meechan to her, and a violent sob shook her wasted frame. Drawn in, Meechan clung to her, and also gave way to tears. There they sat, locked in each other's arms, the childless mother and the motherless child, brought together by the invisible hands of Kaachan.

In the meantime, the shadow of Kaachan's monument reached the far end of the family corner, mists gathered among the trees, and the prayer bell of the pagoda moaned out the approach of evening.

They separated and rose. "It is late, Meechan," the woman said, "let us be going!"

She picked up the basket, and carried it to the front gate of the temple. There she set it down, and standing before it, asked Meechan where she lived. Then she gave the child a last long look, and said, "Sayonara, my dear, dear girl. I shall never forget what you have done today. You may not realise it, but you have saved my life. You made me cry—that was the beginning of a new life. Already I feel much better. And my Kaachan, how happy she must be! May the god of heaven bless you for this." She turned and walked away.

Meechan gazed after her, until she was encompassed by the dust of the busy street.

"Poor Obasan!" she muttered with a sigh, "how lonely she must be, having lost a girl like Kaachan!"

Then, all at once, her thought reverted to her own loneliness which would be doubly hard to bear, now that the dream of the American doll had been shattered. "Well," she said at length, "I do not care. I am a big girl—I am thirteen!"

She came to the basket, and picked it up. "Coo!" A voice like the cry of a baby rose from it. Mystified, Meechan dropped the basket, and looked in. There was the selfsame package the woman had been carrying under her arm. More and more puzzled, she unwrapped the paper. A cry of amazement filled the air—"A doll!"

And a doll it was, and a marvellous one. Though it bore the mark of slight use, it was a genuine Ameri-

can doll—golden of hair, blue of eyes, and pink of cheeks, the size of a ten yen doll! A slip of paper was pinned on its chest, and it said, "This is the doll Kaachan had from an American friend of ours when we were at Ushigome. I have treasured it through all these years, but shall now give it to the dearest and kindest girl in the world. Take care of it, and remember, I am coming to you some day, when I am able to take care of you. Then, we shall no longer be lonely."

ICHINOTANI

It was on the shore at Suma just after Yoshitsune's great victory over the Heike at Ichinotani. The fair maiden, Tama, had been in secret converse with her lover, the young prince Atsumori, a scion of the defeated and annihilated house of Minamoto. A noise was heard. The sound of some one approaching disturbed the happy pair, and Atsumori slipped away into the darkness.

Ah, it was Hirayama, who had long been making suit to Tama. He heaped upon her words of entreaty and affection: "Oh, it is you my fair one, is it? Ever since I first set eyes upon you at the capital you have been in my dreams. I have at last obtained your father's consent to our marriage. I sent Gemba to fetch you, but he was killed on the way.' 'Twill not be long ere we are in the land of Elysium. Here, come along with me now, won't you? I can take you on my horse."

The girl shrank back, wrenching away her hand. "Do not touch me, you rude man!" she exclaimed. "Your behaviour offends and disgusts me."

"What! You will not consent? You despise the wish of your father?"

"No, not that; but I cannot give my heart to more than one."

"That fellow, Atsumori, I suppose! Well, if you search to judgment day you will not find him."

"How is that?"

"Why, because, as I came here just a moment ago, I happened to meet him, and gave him the happy despatch."

"What! Slew my betrothed? May vengeance take you!"

At this the horrified girl held up her hand threateningly, and as if preparing to rush at Hirayama.

"Hold," he cried, lifting his mailed hand. "It would be easy for me to settle your fate, dear creature, but I'll spare you."

"How dare you venture to address me, with blood upon your hands! You wretch! I can hardly contain myself."

"Lady, calm yourself," interrupted Hirayama, with evident choler. "I want a straight answer from you at once. Will you be mine or will you not? Yes, or no, instantly! If you refuse, there is nothing but to make an end of you."

"Kill me if you will," replied Tama, quietly. "Ah, you shameless fellow!"

"Is it not enough that you disobey me, as well as your father, but you must abuse me also, and thus add insult to injury? Thou art a foul yet lovely flower; but thou shalt never live to be plucked by another!"

Drawing his sword like a flash, he made a lunge at

her breast. The girl fell screaming and wounded at his feet.

The young prince had made his way along in the darkness safely until he encountered a warrior of Yoshitsune, the celebrated Naozane Kumagaya.

"Hello, there, halt!" commanded Naozane. "A general of the Taira clan, if I'm not mistaken. If you have your back to the enemy, you're a coward, or prove yourself otherwise now face to face with one of the most gallant knights of the army of Yoshitsune, Naozane Kumagaya. Come on, if you dare!"

At that they closed upon each other and began a heated combat. Their horses plunged, and the warriors lunged fiercely at each other. Alas, the sword of Atsumori was knocked from his hand. He seized his opponent by the sleeve, and they both fell to the ground. In a moment Naozane was uppermost.

"Ah, proud son of Minamoto, thy fate is sealed! I cannot slay a stranger. Declare thy name, before I despatch thee!"

"Naozane Kumagaya," said the prostrate prince, "I have often heard your name, and have understood you to be a man of valiant parts, expert with the sword and versed in all the rules of the combat, of which I myself know something. But I have never heard of a knight demanding that a foe declare his name while down. It is the unalterable custom to stand face to face with an opponent, with arrows fixed, bows drawn, or weapons ready, and then demand the name."

"Right, you are—quite right!" exclaimed Nao-

zane. "Yet it's no honour, as you know, for a warrior to cut off a stranger's head. I only wish to know whether yours is the head of one great enough to increase a great reputation."

"Yes, I see," said the under man, without any sign of emotion or anger. "Well, take my head, if you will; and show it to the great Yoshitsune. If he does not know whose it is, then try Kama-no-kanja; and should he fail to recognize me, show it to the captives of war. They will know it doubtless; and if not, then cast it out as the head of a nameless, worthless knight, to rot on the face of the earth."

"Ah, noble youth," soliloquized Naozane, "so young and fair, so courageous and so versed in the arts of war and combat, why should I have met thee? It is the hand of fate and I must abide it. Oh, the unhappy lot of the warrior! What I *must*, I will do. Let me know thy name, that I may at least be able to pray for the repose of thy soul in Paradise."

"Who dost thou think I am? I am Atsumori, the youngest of the Tsunemori. My age is sixteen; and this is my baptism of blood."

"Ah me, is it so? And only sixteen? I too have a son that age. This morning, advancing at the head of the army at Ichinotani, he received an arrow in the arm. He besought me to pluck it out. But I cast at him a reproachful glance before friend and foe, and said: 'My son, if the wound be mortal, dismount and put an end to thyself; but if not, ride on, face the enemy and die honourably. Do nothing to disgrace your family name.' He was in line in a mo-

ment, and I caught sight of him from behind. I have not seen him since, nor shall I see him more. Ah, how can I return and break the sad news of his fate to his mother? Well, I will spare thee. That cannot turn victory into defeat. My deed will be handed down to posterity as an act of mercy. Rise, go, tell thy father Tsunemori, that Kumagaya of Musashi, against whom thou has bravely fought, for the sake of his own son, Kojiro, has spared thy life."

Taking the young prince by the hand, the old knight brushed the dust from his armour, put him on his horse and bade him adieu.

The young prince had not proceeded very far when he met with a band of soldiers under the command of Yoshitsune and Hirayama. He was immediately apprehended and brought into camp. They knew that Kumagaya had unhorsed him and then set him free, and they were bound to use this to their own advantage. "Yes," said a soldier, "Kumagaya is false-hearted; he spares his lord's enemies. Let us slay them both."

"All right," chimed in a comrade; "and the traitor first!"

"Kumagaya beckoned to young Atsumori, and said: "Young man, I'm afraid your fate is sealed!"

"Yes," acquiesced the noble youth, "it is probably as you have said. I would sooner die calmly by the sword than be killed in flight by a common soldier."

The young prince was now ordered to prepare for death. Kumagaya was given the privilege of des-

patching him, that the death might be honourable. Atsumori knelt and in a moment the lifted sword severed his head from his body. A cheer arose from the soldiers, and a great shout to the effect that one more general of the Taira clan had been slain.

A woman now approached the scene. She dragged herself along as if in pain and distress. It was Tama. She gazed a moment at the headless body, and said: 'Oh, it is the young Lord Atsumori, my betrothed! Where is his head? May I see it just once more?"

"Why should you wish to see so gruesome a thing?" asked Kumagaya.

"Well, you know I am Tama Orihime, the woman he loved. So you will let me see his face again, won't you?"

They brought her the head. She took it in her arms and fondled it. "How changed, my love, ah so changed! For you I have wandered far. For your sake, Hirayama has given me this fatal wound. How sad a fate for you and me!"

Upon this the girl fell in a faint; for she was weak with loss of blood, and the strain of her grief was more than most women could have borne. She breathed heavily now. Her end was near, soft words came from her lips; prayers for a happy meeting with her lover on the fair lotus flower of Paradise. Then she passed away.

Kumagaya stood there in silence, gazing on the two lifeless forms. His heart was very full of strange emotions. He suddenly decided that war was hell.

He now hated the world. He moaned aloud and began to talk to himself. He hardly realized that the others had gone and left him standing there alone: "Oh, unhappy fate! Two buds blighted at their opening, ere they unfolded themselves in the light of the sun. Alas, what is man, that he should be so noble and beauteous a creature, and yet so fragile and transient! As for me I can no longer be as I have been. I must renounce the world. The only happiness left to me is to retire, and spending the rest of my days in prayer for the souls of these two fallen ones, and for the souls of all that have fallen by my sword! Namu Amida!"

THE PRIEST'S STAFF

A NO KYOGEN

Translated by A. L. Sadler

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

Shite (Chief Actor).....A Priest.
Ato (After, or Secondary Actor)...Master of the House
Koato (Little After, or Minor Actor).....A Wife

Shite: I, who appear before you, am a priest living in the country. I happened to have some business in the Capital, and at the same time I ordered a staff to be made, and as it is now time for it to be finished, I have come today to fetch it. Well, Well! So we go along! There's no more pleasant life in this world than a monk's! I think I'll go and pay my respects to some Buddha, and stay there a while before I go back again. Ah, here we are at the maker of staves. Ho, there! Is the master at home?

Master: Who is there?

Shite: It is I who have come!

Master: Oh, is it the monk who ordered the staff?

Shite: It is, and is it ready yet?

Master: It is quite finished. Please wait a moment, and I will bring it and show you.

Shite: Ah, good. Please do so.

Master: Here it is.

Shite: Well, that's excellent! It is exactly as I ordered it.

Master: Indeed, I have taken great pains with it. I may say it is much finer stuff than the ones I showed you before. I must have a joke on this staff, you see.

Shite: A very good one, too!

Master: How very white the wood of it is!

Shite: Since it is not lacquered it can't be covered.

Master: Capital! Capital!

Shite: Can you ornament it in lacquer?

Master: When this staff is broken, what will you do then?

Shite: I can only think of one thing at a time.

Master: Better and better! Really you are exceedingly witty! Now I am carrying on this occupation, but what I have always wished is to forsake the world and become a monk. I pray you come in and partake of my humble meal, that I may enjoy the opportunity of hearing some of your holy teaching. Do, I beg you!

Shite: Truly, it is the business of us monks to give exhortation. Yes, I will come in. And kindly bring the staff with you. Here we are.

Master: Yes, your reverence, as I have just stated, I should so much like to become a recluse,

and I was hoping that you might be able to take me as your disciple, so that we might be able to travel about the country together.

Shite: Oh, to forsake the world and shave your head and become my disciple is an easy thing enough, but first you should take counsel with your relations, your brothers, and your wife, for if people become recluses without proper reflection they sometimes repent of it afterwards. For when you become a monk you have to observe the Law of Buddha, and to study the Sutras and Mantras, and—ah—be careful not to misconduct yourself, you know. But if you do the things that you ought to do, you will have a mind quite free from care, and wherever you wish to go you can go, and wherever you wish to stay you can stay! Ah, and if you rid yourself of that nasty, grasping, envious, avaricious desire, your mind will be so devoid of all trouble that you will become just like a Buddha.

Master: Ah, how true, how true! But this wish of mine is no sudden one, for I have cherished it for a long time. I quite understand everything, so please make me your disciple at once.

Shite: You are sure you quite understand and agree to everything?

Master. I am quite sure.

Shite: Then I will shave your head. And your relations and your wife are also quite of the same opinion?

Master: I consulted with my women-folk some

time ago, and they are quite willing that I should do as I please.

Shite: Then that is sufficient! So prepare yourself.

Master: Very well! I will have my head shaved.

Wife: My man seems to have gone out of the house with that monk who came to get the staff he had ordered. I wonder what they are doing! They are a long time about it: I will go and see. Ya-a-a-h! Is that you making yourself into a monk? Whose doing is this? This monk wants to shave your head, does he? I'll teach you, you——!

Shite: What does she say? I thought you said your wife was quite willing?

Wife: Who dares to say so? What d'you take me for? Become a priest indeed! You get off back where you came from, wherever that is! Off with you! You make me mad!

Shite: What's this! I didn't persuade him against his will. He said it had always been his secret desire.

Wife: That's a lie! You dirty swindling bonze! I'll give you something!

Shite: Oh! Oh! Don't! Please excuse me! This is very unpleasant!

Wife: Yah! You! You thought you would become a monk without saying anything to me, did you? What did you think I was going to do? Eh?

Master: Oh, no! It was because this monk told

me what a pleasant life it was, and invited me to become one. So I thought I would shave my head.

Wife: Nonsense! Don't tell me that tale! Well? What now?

Master: Oh, I've changed my mind now. So pray excuse me!

Wife: Get away you wretch! I won't excuse you!

THE HOLY HOUSES OF SLEEP

By Yone Noguchi

It has become my habit on my way to college once a week, where my weakness betrays itself under the quite respectable name of interpreter of English poets, ancient or modern, to invite my own soul even for awhile where the shadows of pine-trees thicken along the path of breezes in Shiba Park; it makes my wandering in the holy houses of sleep of the great feudal princes the most natural thing. I clearly remember how afraid I was in my boyhood days, whenever I happened to pass by them, of being hailed by the dark, undiscerning voice of Death. Oh, my friends and philosophers in all lands, is it a matter of thankfulness as today even to fall in love with its sweetness, and to reflect on its golden-hearted generosity and accidentally to despise Life? I say here at either the sacred house of the Sixth Prince, or that of the Second Prince, that one cannot help loving Death when he sees right before himself such an imposing house of sleep of green, red, and yellow, of the gold and lacquer, of the colours unmixed and simple, soaring out of this and that wealth of life, the colours that have reached the final essence and power of Nature.

Although it might be a modern fashion to speak of symbolism, I flatly refuse to look through its looking-glass of confused quality, on the phœnixes, paradise-birds, lotuses, peonies, lions, and ocean waves which decorate the inside of the temple, where the years of incense prayer have darkened and mystified the general atmosphere. Our old artists had a strength in their jealous guarding of beauty for beauty's sake; they felt but did not theorize; therefore, in such a beauty of confusion as I see in these holy temples there is the most clear simplicity, the beauty of the last judgment. Indeed, I wish to know if there is any house better for sleep and rest than those temples of spirit in my beloved Shiba Park.

The beauty of Death is in its utter rejection of profusion; it is the desire of intensity itself which only belongs to the steadfastness and silence of a star; oh, what a determination it declares! It is perfect; its epical perfection arises from the point that it will never return toward Life; its grandeur is in the pride that it shall never associate itself with life's clatter. Oh, Death is triumph! It is the great aspect of Japanese romance of the fighting age to make the moment of death as beautiful as possible; I can count a hundred names of heroes and fighters whom we remember only from the account of their beautiful death, not of their beautiful lives, on whom stories and dramas have been gorgeously written. And it was the civilization of the Tokugawa feudalism, the age of peace, to make us look upon Death with artistic adoration and poetical respect. We read so

much in our Japanese history of the powers and works of that Tokugawa family, which lasted with untired energy until only forty years ago; oh, where today can the strong proof of its existence be traced? Is it not, I wonder, only a "name written on water?" But the great reverence toward Death that it encouraged will be still observed like the sun or moon in the holy temples at Nikko or Shiba Park, the creations of art it realized during the long three hundred years. True to say, art lives longer than life and the world.

I often think how poor our Japanese life might have been if we had not developed, by accident or wisdom, this great reverence toward Death, without whose auspices many beautiful shapes of art, I am sure, would never have existed; the stone lantern for instance, to mention a thing particularly near my mind when I loiter alone in the sacred ground of the Second Shogun, in the wide open yard perfectly covered by pebbles in the first entrance-gate, where hundreds of large stone lanterns stand most respectfully in rows; quite proper for the feudal age, those lone sentinels. When the *toro* or stone lantern leaves the holy place of spirit for the garden, matter-of-fact and plebeian, it soon assumes the front of pure art; but how can it forget the place where it was born? We at once read its religious aloofness under the democratic mask. To see it squatting solemn and sad with the pine trees makes me imagine an ancient monk in meditation, cross-legged, not yet awakened to the holy understanding of truth and light; is there not the attitude of a prophet crying in

the wilderness in its straight, tall shape upon the large moss-carpeted lawn? I myself have never been able to take it merely as a creation of art since my tender age when my boy's imagination took its flicker of light under the depth of darkness to be a guiding lamp for my sister's dead soul hastening toward Hades in her little steps; it was a rainy night when she died in her ninth year. I cannot separate my memory of her from the stone lantern; again, I cannot dissociate the stone lantern with the black night and autumnal rain under whose silence the lantern sadly burned, indeed, like a spirit eternal and Divine.

In the first place, whenever I think of the general effect of the reverence of Death upon our national life, I deem the love of cleanliness the greatest of it; when I say that it really grew in the Tokugawa age, I have in my mind the thought that the reverence toward Death reached its full development then. When the custom of keeping the household shrine came strictly to be observed, the love of cleanliness soon promulgated itself as an important duty; and the thought of sharing the same roof with the spirit or ghost makes you, as the next thing, wiser, not to act foolishly or talk scandalously. The appreciation of greyness and silence is born from that reverence of Death; as you live with the dead souls in one house, Death ceases to be fearful and menacing, and becomes beautiful and suggestive like the whisper of a breeze or the stir of incense. Death is then more real than life, like that incense or breeze; again so is silence more real than voice.

THE LIVING-FIELD RIVER

This is a tale of long ago; and the tales of long ago are as full of human pathos as any of today; for in Japan, no more than other lands, has the human heart much changed through the centuries.

The scene of our story lies in the little village of Ashiya in the province of Tsu, or Settsu, where once lived a maiden whose beauty of figure and feature was the dream of many a youth throughout the countryside. Unai was not only fair to look upon, but of a character and temperament exceeding amiable and gracious, winning the affection and esteem of all who knew her. Indeed, the care of her parents was to keep her from the attention of suitors, who thronged the humble home and pestered the maid beyond measure. Among these, two were more supremely in love than the rest; and Ubara and Osadao had in some degree the parental sympathy, but how to choose between them, with justice to each, was the problem.

Under one pretext or another the two youths managed to find themselves having business at the home of Unai with excessive frequency; and the maiden was noticed to bestow upon each a respectful measure of attention. They were indeed men of spirit, as

men go; and the parents of the lass were more and more at a loss to arrive at a solution of the difficulty. Neither would be satisfied with a refusal, and of course the girl could not be given to both. It was the old story of two men in love with the same woman, just the same as it has happened in all countries since the world began. Usually the end of such a circumstance is tragic; but we shall see.

The parents soon sized up the situation; and suspecting that the upshot of it all would be a duel, unless they interfered, the father determined to take a hand.

One evening the two young men arrived at the home of Unai, and were met at the gate by the father, who accosted them with all due respect, and inquired wherefore they were out so late. "Ah," replied one of them, "we have spent the day hunting that we might bring some game with us to gladden your hospitable board, but regretful to relate, we have secured nothing."

"Yes," continued the cautious parent, "I know your game; the object of your hunting is not of the forest, but of the home and heart. But if you two gentlemen are determined to hunt the same game, I will set you a chase. Near by flows the Ikuta river. If you go down and stand by its banks you will see floating on the water a fair white swan. I shall give my daughter to whichever of you brings me that swan shot with a bow and an arrow; I shall accept the pierced bird as a *Muko-hikide*, or bridegroom's souvenir. So go and try your bow!"

When Unai learned of her father's action she was naturally not a little disconcerted, and sought to dissuade him from his purpose. But it was too late to retract the proposal, for the youths had slipped silently away on their anxious and sacred mission.

Silent, deep and solemn flows the Ikuta stream, the living-field river. Adown its silvery tide the rich rays of sunset streamed in splendour. And there in the quiet twilight rested the fair white swan on its heaving bosom. Each youth raised his bow and, placing his arrow, took aim; and each was equally sure of victory. Swift flew the anxious arrows simultaneously to their mark, and white feathers and limpid stream alike were incarnadined with blood.

By the cottage window sat Unai, her brain racked with strange thoughts, awaiting the outcome of the contest. He who shoots the fair maiden swan will come and take me to wife this night, she pondered to herself, as she endeavoured to contemplate her new life to come. But she was most concerned for the youth who should lose. Her thoughts were soon broken in upon by the return of the two hunters, bearing the dead bird, the one holding it by the head and the other the feet. The arrow of the one had gone through the swan's head and that of the other through her heart, and both still claimed the same girl.

Alas and alack, matters were now worse than ever, as the rivalry would henceforth be sure to partake of the tragic. She was silent for a while; and then she realized that it lay with herself to adjust the situa-

tion and settle everything once for all. Unai slipped out of the house, and was never afterwards heard of more. Though parents and lovers searched everywhere no tidings of the lost maid could be had, and the whole village was disconsolate. At last the body of the maiden was taken from the river Ikuta, and in her sleeve was found this poem:

Sumi wabinu
  Waga-mi nageten
Tsu no kuni no
  Ikuta no kawa wa
  Na ni koso arikere

O Living-field river,
  Meaning live, and not die,
In thee do I shiver
  And utter death's cry;
  Loath to live anymore
  On fair Settsu's shore!

Upon reading this poem the two lovers went and did likewise; and for commemoration of the threefold tragedy the villagers set up three memorial stones, with an epitaph for the two untimely lovers on either side of the maiden's name; and the stones are called *motome-zuka* or tomb of courtship, unto this day. He who would read more in detail of this oldest love tale of old Japan must peruse the pages of the nation's oldest literary anthology, the *Manyoshu*, or Collection of Myriad Leaves.

A VISION OF THE UNSEEN

The habit of seeing ghosts is nowhere looked upon as a racial prerogative. In every country there are those who claim to have seen the spirits of the dead, and in several well authenticated cases it is easier to believe in the statements of the witnesses than to ascribe their convictions to illusion. And this seems to be no less true in Japan than elsewhere. The first instance we propose to relate is in connection with no less a personage than Her Majesty, the Empress Dowager. The incident occurred during the Russo-Japanese war. At the time, Her Majesty was staying at the Imperial villa in Hayama. It was during the fiercest period of that mighty conflict, and the issue of the struggle was doubtless weighing heavily on the mind of her gracious Majesty. The Empress had retired to rest, and was favoured with profound slumber. About two o'clock in the morning Her Majesty was awakened by an apparition. The vision of a samurai of livid complexion, and wearing the *mage*, arose to view. The hair was so dishevelled that he might have come through some ordeal, and some of his locks were hanging down over his cheeks. He wore clothes of *kokura*, and the family crest was on them.

"Who may you be?" inquired Her Majesty.

"A thousand pardons deign," replied the ghostly visitant, "but I am only a poor samurai, without rank or place; and my name is Sakamoto Ryuma."

"And why have you come?" the gracious lady continued.

"The Russian Baltic Fleet may be brought out to Japan," said the samurai, "but victory for us is assured; so I pray your Majesty not to be anxious," and thereupon the spirit vanished.

Next morning Her Majesty made no reference to the extraordinary experience of the night; but the next night at exactly the same hour, the ghost of the samurai returned, and exactly the same conversation took place. This happened for two more nights in succession. Her Majesty now deemed it opportune to speak of it; and calling a chamberlain, named Kagawa, asked him about the general appearance of the samurai, Sakamoto Ryuma. The chamberlain did not happen to know of such a man; but on asking Marquis Inouye, it was found that the latter had a photograph of the samurai. Her Majesty was taking a walk in the garden when the photograph was brought and left in the Imperial sitting-room, while the chamberlain went to tell Her Majesty of it. But before he found the Empress, she had returned to the room, and met the chamberlain with the inquiry: "Who has brought the photograph of Sakamoto Ryuma?" Then Her Majesty went on to say that it was the photograph of the man who had appeared to her in a vision. It is said that when the

members of the Imperial household heard of the experience of Her Majesty, the Empress, they were deeply impressed, and not only took it as a heavenly message for the assurance of the nation in the ordeal of the great war, but made it a subject of discussion as a proof of immortality.

In Japan it is believed by many that the spirits of the dead, not only take a benign interest in the affairs of the living, but that when the living do wrong, the ghosts of the past will pursue and punish the offender. Some time ago an old woman, who used to collect the offerings of the devotees at the shrine of Kwannon in Asakusa, was murdered by a man named Miyamoto, after which he went to hide in the village of Tochigi. When the murderer called at the hotel for lodgings, he inquired for a room for himself alone. "Then," said the maid of the hotel, "who is that old woman with you: your companion behind you there?"

"Eh," gasped the man, looking behind him, but he could see no one. Though he could not see the woman, he believed she ever followed him; and as he could not rest, he returned to Tokyo to seek employment and reform. Calling at a second-hand clothes shop at Shitaya, he was accosted by the dealer: "Say, Mr. Miyamoto, I see you have a companion now, going about with you. Who is that old lady behind you?"

Miyamoto laughed off the question, but his mind was so troubled that at last remorse settled down upon him, and his manner became so remarkable

that he was arrested by the police, when he confessed his crime.

Again, there was a rice merchant at Kyuyemoncho, Kanda, who had a faithful maid named Ohana. The wife grew jealous of her and accused her of stealing money. Under this disgrace the girl fell ill, and as the wife did not nurse her very carefully, she died. The servant was duly buried, and the house seemed to go on as aforetime. At last a woman came one night to buy some rice.

"How much rice do you want?" asked the wife of the rice merchant.

"Only one *sho*," said the customer. People who wanted only one *sho* of rice were usually the poorest of the poor; hence they always came at night, with a shawl over their heads. But on these sales the merchant had the highest profit. As the merchant's wife was getting the rice a woman, looking just like the dead girl, Ohana, peeped into the shop, with an angry face, and said, "Yes, one *sho* will do!" The wife felt quite faint, and that evening was able to do nothing more. Not long afterwards, the husband was doing business in the shop one evening, when he remarked with a shiver, looking at the shop boy, "I see Ohana at the door." The boy opened it, but saw no one. On another evening the wife was doing some work in the kitchen, when she asked the maid to bring her a plate. Suddenly she heard the voice of Ohana, and *only a hand appeared*, proffering the desired plate. The woman swooned and was ill for some time. From that day the family of the rice

merchant were so afraid that they did not like to be left alone at night; the shop got the name of being haunted, and at last no one would go there to buy rice, so the merchant became bankrupt. Everyone familiar with the circumstances believes that the misfortune was brought about by the spirit of the persecuted girl, who died through ill-treatment and neglect.

BITTER FOR SWEET

In the Kwansei era, that is, about the middle of the 17th Century, there lived in a village in Bitchu a venerable old man named Furukawa Koshoken, who was regarded as remarkable for his extraordinary intelligence and reserved demeanour. As he lived not far from the mansion of Lord Ito of Okada-mura, the retainers used to call upon him frequently in leisure hours to have a chat and to enjoy his conversation.

One day as they were all engaged in animated conversation the old man excused himself and retired to another part of the house; and as his absence lengthened, the guests began to grow weary of waiting and wondered what was the cause of his delay. As it was in the early days of winter, strings of drying persimmon hung from the eaves of the house; and the mellow, luscious appearance of the newly-cut fruit attracted the attention of the visitors. Finally for a lark they began to try them, and ended in consuming the lot. Then they waited to see what the old man would do.

In time he returned to his place in the room and

with due apology for having kept them waiting, resumed the conversation. All were surprised that he seemed not to notice that the fruit was gone; or if he did, he made no reference to it. The guilty guests looked at one another with knowing glances, and tried to keep up the chat as if nothing had happened.

The old man now opened a drawer in a tobacco box, and commenced searching as if he had missed something therefrom. Asked if he had lost anything, he replied: "Gentlemen, before you came in, I placed some money I had just received, in this drawer, as there was no time to put it away more carefully; and now when I come to examine the box, the money is not to be found. I did not take the box out of the room with me, as you know; and yet the money has disappeared."

The visitors, looking very much agitated, got up and joined in searching for the money; and the host called in his wife and servants to join in the hunt. As suspicion naturally fell on the visitors, they were in no small degree embarrassed, and knew not what to do or say. "Of course," began the old man at last, "from my knowledge of you all I cannot accuse you of taking the money; you are undoubtedly too honest for that. Yet how is it that the money is gone? Not for a moment would I suspect one of you of attempting to relieve me of my property. But I know that it is very difficult to get perfect servants, and if any of my household should be so regardless of duty as to whisper this affair abroad, it would doubtless bring dishonour on the good name of all of you;

and how to prevent this from passing from mouth to mouth is a distressing difficulty."

"We beg of you to allay suspicion against us as far as possible," said the guests; "for truly, as you suggest, if this thing should come to be known outside ourselves, the result could only be our disgrace."

After pondering for some time the old man at length began again: "This is a matter that cannot be set at rest by speech alone; and it would be impossible to go around to every house and try to remove suspicion. But there is a device less inconvenient and more sure. You know the old saying, which certainly seems foolish, yet is so long credited that it may be worth acting upon, namely that if a deceiver swallows the *go-o* of Kumano he will expectorate blood. Some years ago when I was in Kumano I got some of the real article, thinking that it might prove interesting some time, but as I have not yet tried it, now seems the very opportunity. If I dissolve it in water, and allow each of you to take a cup, all suspicion in the eyes of the common people would be allayed. But as it would be somewhat rude of me to press such a test upon my guests, of course I leave it to your judgment."

To his surprise, the visitors one and all agreed to the proposal, requesting their host to prepare the charmed liquid at once. This the old man got up and did in no time, presenting a cupful to each. The visitors on tasting it, found it bitter beyond words but as guests they could not reject what they had accepted; and so with knit brows, and pursed lips, wry

faces and trembling heads and hands, they finally managed to get it all down. Then some got up and began vigorously to rinse their mouths, while others failed to retain what they had drunk. They began to realize that if they did not actually spit up blood, they at least were more uncomfortable than if they had. There was no doubt that they had the worst of the bargain. As they coughed and spluttered and appeared somewhat discomposed and averse to further conversation, the old man spoke and said:

"After overmuch pleasure always comes pain." The guests looked at each other in bewilderment and remorse. The old man continued: "It is but a natural consequence that you should experience a taste intolerably bitter after regaling yourselves on what was so sweet. The liquid you have taken is reckoned a very good thing for the *innerds*, especially after a surfeit of fruit which is liable to bring on colic and bowel complaint."

The visitors now saw what their host was after; and they realized how they had fallen into their own trap. They could not, of course, refrain from laughter, as the old man smiled somewhat knowingly at them in their awkward predicament; but they had learned the folly of unkind practical jokes, nevertheless.

HUMAN DESTINY

In the closing years of the 18th Century there lived in Kyoto an artist skilled both with the brush and pen, though his work at first found little appreciation. To most of his contemporaries he was more remarkable for his eccentricity than for those noble and elegant drawings that now command the admiration of the world. Like most Japanese artists, Taiga Ikeno had no concern for money, vainglory and the things of the world generally, being content to endure poverty, so long as he could enjoy his art.

One day on passing a certain book shop he saw a beautiful old book on Buddhism printed in fine old stone type; and, falling in love with it, he determined to have it. So away he went and began to save up until he had collected a hundred *ryo*, when he came back and inquired the price. Greatly to his disappointment the dealer asked more than Taiga had saved, and there was no persuading him to come down in the price. Grieved beyond measure the poor painter walked away. As he strolled homeward he chanced to pass the temple of Gion. Gazing in becoming reverence at the sacred edifice he bethought himself to bestow upon Buddha the money

that had failed to secure the book. "As it has failed to purchase the book, I have no more use for the money," he said to himself; so he approached the altar and laid the gold before the gods. Then he went back to his humble abode and lived in poverty as before.

As he had nothing to lose, Taiga never fastened his door at night. Once, however, he was visited by a thief; and when the artist awoke and saw his few possessions being ransacked, he called out to the intruder: "If you leave me my piece of blue matting and my canvases, you are welcome to all else." On hearing this the thief shrank away in shame, having taken nothing.

The ideals of Taiga, both as to conception and execution, were away above the common people who were more interested in his odd ways than in his artistic productions. Once in order to replenish his slender store he painted a bundle of fans, and set out through the province of Owari to sell them; but he did not find sufficient demand to pay him for his trouble. On his way back to Kyoto he had to cross the Seta bridge in Omi; whereupon he sighed deeply, and threw the fans into the stream as oblations to the spirit of the waters.

As time went on his art began to be recognized, and he won the fame he had long deserved. But admiration and honour made no difference in his life of poverty. His wife was no less skilled than himself, and was also noted as a player of the *samisen*. All their spare time they spent together practising their

art or enjoying her music, with no thought of the morrow.

On a certain occasion when Taiga visited Osaka the proprietor of a hotel persuaded him to indite a sign to place over the hostelry door: the sign had to bear characters for *Yamatoya.* Taiga wrote *Yamato,* and then suddenly stopped, went out, and, though they expected him to return and finish the job any moment, he did not turn up again for a week. Whereupon he explained that as soon as he had written the ideographs for *Yamato,* he thought of the cherry blossoms then in bloom at Yoshino in the province of *Yamato,* and could do nothing more until he had gone to gaze on their beauty. Then he took up again his brush and added the character for *ya,* finishing the sign.

Those most familiar with his life declare that there was no affectation about him and that his innocent eccentricities were perfectly natural. A great personage of Kyoto once ordered a painting from Taiga, and when the artist kept putting off the execution of it, the patron sent a messenger to remonstrate, "You are quite right and I am quite wrong"; and then he began the painting and soon completed it. A clerk in a Kyoto book store embezzled some of his master's money, and Taiga felt so sorry for the unfortunate youth that he sold some of his pictures to enable the delinquent to make up the loss. But when one of his own pupils made a picture that was not true to life, and then sold it as a piece of art, Taiga was so displeased that he expelled the charlatan from his

studio, and apologized to the victim of the deception. On dismissing the false artist Taiga said: "Poverty is the natural destiny of man; and he who cannot endure it, but must needs resort to shameless means to avoid it, is unworthy the name of man." Taiga lived to the year 1876, when he passed away at the age of fifty-four; and today even the most insignificant specimen of his painting or caligraphy, commands a fabulous sum.

AN OLD MAN AND A MIRROR

Years and years ago when mirrors were unknown among the common people in Japan, an old man of the Province of Omi, leaving his wife behind, had journeyed alone and was paying a visit to the Mikado's Capital, Kyoto.

Wandering, in wonder at the many strange sights, along the crowded thoroughfare of Sanjodori, a shining, dazzling object in one of the shops caught his eye, and he looked with manifest astonishment at it. A strange thing it was, and as he gazed upon its glittering surface, he beheld the fair face of a woman appear, and quickly disappear, and he thought at once that he had seen a vision of some good goddess who might bring him great fortune, for the mirror did not unfold to him the fact that the lovely maiden had passed in reality behind him.

Deeply impressed by what he had seen, he resolved to possess himself of this object, whatever it might be, through which he had evidently received a divine revelation, and entered the shop where it was displayed to inquire if it could be bought, and at what price.

Having been watching the old man, the shrewd shop-keeper observed the surprise and wonder with

which his prospective customer had contemplated the mirror, and surmising his ignorance and credulity, set an enormous price upon it, and described it in glowing terms, as a marvellous treasure, which inspired the old man with a still keener desire to acquire it. Unhesitatingly he drew forth his gold and gave it in exchange for the coveted prize, honestly believing it would be the means of wealth and happiness to him and his.

He hastily returned to his native place, but kept all that had transpired concerning the mirror a secret, and hiding it safely in his cabinet, consulted it privately each day, gazing long and intently into it awed by his own features, and failing to understand the mystery, he waited expectantly for some further demonstration through its divine agency.

His strange demeanour attracted his wife's attention; she became suspicious of his queer, secret actions, and spied upon him to discover the cause. During his absence, she went to the cabinet, where she had seen him so engrossed with something which she suspected would reveal to her the real reason for her husband's unusual behaviour, and suddenly came upon a glistening thing that showed the living, moving features of a woman! Convinced of the evil doings of her spouse, she fled in rage from the thing that had struck terror in her heart, and filled her with dread and fear beside, as possessed of a supernatural attribute that evidently wielded a strong influence over the man, and might as easily draw her under its compelling power. She spoke not a word

about it to her mother-in-law, but when her husband returned she met him in violent anger, and heaped upon him many accusations and abuses. Innocent of it all, he vainly sought to pacify the irate wife, who all the more incensed at such persistent denials, dashed to the drawer and produced her very convincing evidence, continuing her hysterical ravings. Quite at a loss what to do, but not wishing a scandal to be started among the neighbours, he quickly unsheathed an ancient sword that had long been an heirloom in the family and was believed to be effective in dispersing evil spirits, and brandishing it ominously, struck a heavy blow upon the object that had brought him this dire misfortune instead of the blessings he had counted upon.

Shattered into many pieces, it fell, frightening the two women away. Gathering up the fragments he was alarmed to find that, instead of the one face which he had been studying daily, it had now multiplied to the number of pieces into which he had broken his strange treasure, for each tiny piece presented the same visage.

Overwhelmed with fear he fled from the house and into the fields with all the swiftness at his command, lest he be overtaken by the demon of that circle of bright, brittle, mysterious substance.

Still running, he had passed over the hills and was climbing a precipitous mountain when he became aware that night was upon him and for the first time he stopped to think where he was going. He realized that he must be far indeed from any business

habitation, and that it would be quite useless to seek any other shelter than that the tall trees offered him; but a far off and faint glimmer made him turn his steps in its direction, which led him along a difficult and deserted trail, which he persevered in following to an isolated and solitary abode.

Announcing himself a footsore and weary traveller who lost his way in the darkness, he besought admittance for a night's lodging. He was told that only women lived there, but that occasionally the goddess Benzaiten, from her temple of Chikubu Island in Lake Biwa, honoured them with her presence, and he would be welcomed for her sake. The portals were opened to him and standing within was the same beautiful woman whose face he had first seen in the mirror. She showed him much kindness, and after the night's hospitality, bestowed upon him a bag and bottle of which he would learn the contents upon returning home, and sent with him a guide that he might reach the foot of the mountain safely.

He proceeded with some doubt as to his wife welcoming him, but being innocent of any wrong-doing, he hoped the bag and the bottle held some proper reward for his suffering, and went bravely on.

On reaching home he found his wife peacefully awaiting him, and together they opened the things he carried as he related his experience. Pouring a crystal fluid from the bottle, they sipped its nectar and discovered themselves to be restored to youth and in great rejoicing they emptied the bag of its yellow sand, for it was pure gold.

A DREAM OR NO?

In the days of the Tokugawa régime there lived in Yedo a fishvender named Kuma. Like most men, he had a wife; and with her he lived on the best of terms through many a happy month. But as time went on, and years burdened him with the nervous stress and strain of making ends meet, he fell into the saké habit, and himself and helpmate were reduced to poverty. The now unhappy wife pleaded day in and day out with her fallen husband, but he was deaf to all entreaty, and her beseechings were in vain; for when saké takes hold upon a man it is easier for the leopard to change his spots than for him to reform.

On a certain morning when the wife awoke from her uneven slumber, her still more restless partner was not to be seen. This caused her no great surprise, for it was his part to rise early every day and be at the fishmarket in time to have a choice of the best of the previous day's catch; but there was no doubt that this morning he had taken himself to work much earlier than usual. While she pondered the matter over at her leisure, Kuma himself was wandering down by the Shibahama shore, waiting for the market to open. The dawn was breaking, but the sun had not yet appeared. The sea was a heaving

leaden grey, as heavy looking and dull as his own saké-stunted heart. For a moment he rested on a boulder on the beach; and as the early morning twilight deepened, he noticed something unusual at his feet. He stubbed it with his toes, and it proved not to be a stone. He picked it up; and lo, it was a leather purse. Opening it anxiously he found within the sum of 100 ryo in shining gold.

Like most men of his class and kind under such circumstances he suddenly concluded that at last his troubles were ended; and so with visions of future ease dazzling his twinkling eyes, and his feet scarcely touching solid earth, Kuma set out for home with his treasure. The saké-bibber is wont to pride himself on his large-heartedness; so Kuma determined to begin his life of leisure by inviting all his friends to a spree to quaff the jovial bowl and have for once the time of their lives. As he squatted on the *tatami* in his tiny room, meditating on how best to carry out his generous intentions, he spied the remains of his last night's booze in a bottle nearby. With the force of unbroken habit he placed the bottle to his lips, and before he knew where he was, he was in the land of dreams.

That Kuma had returned without fish naturally caused his wife some misgiving; but now that he was asleep, she searched him and was greatly amazed at the extent of his savings for the morning. Suspecting that something was not quite right about it, she laid it quietly away, and then awoke her bleareyed lord. "Leave me alone," he expostulated. "I

work no more. My purse is full of gold. See for yourself!"

The wife laughed in his face. "Don't talk such nonsense," she remonstrated. "You with 100 ryo? You have dreamed it, man!"

As the money was not to be seen, Kuma quite accepted the suggestion, and became convinced that it must have been a dream. Again he reiterated the story, loath to regard it as the result of his half bottle of saké; but his wife chided him and said, "Why, you drank till past midnight, and have been sleeping ever since! What else could it be but a dream?"

Poor Kuma accepted it as such, and now began to regret that the dream had not come true. However, the dream gave him a new ambition. Henceforth he determined not to rest till he had saved 100 ryo in gold. From that day forward he gave up the saké cup, and settled down to business with a will. In a little over two years he not only had a respectable sum saved, but he was one of the most prosperous fishmongers in the city.

It fell upon a certain evening that the servants came into the room where the fishmonger and his wife were enjoying the quiet of the after supper hour, and asked permission to go to the bath. Now that the house was absolutely to themselves, the couple began to chat about their good luck:

"What a happy and pleasant New Year we have had?" remarked the wife. "Yes, indeed," replied Kuma. "It is all the result of my temperance. I feel great shame when I look back to the miserable

life I led you two years ago. It is indeed something to try and forget."

"Well," rejoined the wife, "we'll let bygones be bygones. The darkest cloud may have a silver lining. But for your dream, you might not have reformed. However, I have something to show you!"

Thereupon she went to her *tansu* drawer and pulled out a small *furushiki*, and unrolled the leather purse with the 100 ryo. When Kuma set eyes on it he knew it at once. He gazed at the purse in abject bewilderment for a moment, and then broke out in anger:

"That is the identical purse I picked up on the beach at Shibahama two years ago. What do you mean by treating me in this manner? You told me I must have dreamed it. You have lied to me!"

The wife remained unperturbed; and her unruffled manner calmed her wounded lord. At last she spoke:

"Well, with me it was this way. I knew somebody must have lost the money. Had you spent it you might have been put down as a criminal, and both of us should have suffered for it. You were not in your right mind at that time, and it would have been useless for me to have tried to reason with you. I saved you by leading you to believe it was a dream. I handed the money over to the police, as was my duty; but after keeping it for more than a year, the owner has not been found, and the money has been returned to me. Now that you know how to take care of it, here it is for you!"

Kuma gazed in silence at his wife, and tears of humiliation streamed down his hardy cheeks. He bowed and thanked her from the bottom of his heart.

The wife quickly arose and withdrew. In a brief space she reappeared with a tiny table, bearing saké cups and bottle. Laying it with her best grace before her husband, she bowed and said:

"You bravely fought the drink demon, and conquered the awful passion for saké; and now you have your reward. May I offer you a cup of saké to drink with you to your victory?"

So saying, she handed Kuma the cup and poured it full to the brim. Kuma took it up and held it firmly for a moment. Then he placed it on the table again. Now he turned to his wife and said:

"I cannot drink saké!"

"And why not?" asked his wife, in mild surprise.

"I cannot take it," said he, "lest our happiness and our gold turn out once more to be only a dream!"

ARCHERY IN THE OLDEN TIME

In old Japan archery was regarded as one of the most indispensable attainments of a samurai, coming next in importance to the art of swordsmanship and dexterity with the spear or lance. Under the impetus of this prevailing sentiment there arose many a man far famed for his skill with the bow and arrow. Among these none more deserved the distinction he was accorded than Yoshida Kimbei, a member of the Kanazawa clan under Daimio Mayeda. This was during the Tokugawa period, the golden age of Japanese archery.

In the neighbourhood of the house of Yoshida an old badger had taken up its abode; and as it frequently committed depredation on the people of the place they were in terror of it and greatly wished its destruction. Everybody set traps to catch the obnoxious animal, but it skilfully evaded all attempts at capture or interference. Dogs were tried, yet even they proved futile. Yoshida thought he might as well try a hand at it, so one day while sitting at his window he spied the badger running along by the fence, when he seized his bow and let fly an arrow at a venture. Though convinced that he had hit his

mark he could find no trace of the creature. From that time, however, the neighbours ceased to be troubled by mischief wrought by the animal; they were content to be relieved without caring much as to the destiny of the beast.

Some twenty days afterwards one of the villagers came to the house of Yoshida with an arrow which he said he had found in the body of a dead badger lying on the slope of the hill in the neighbourhood; and as he had found the name of the famous archer on the weapon, he had brought it to him. At this Yoshida only smiled, never admitting that he had fired the fatal shot; but the villagers believed that it had flown from a strong bow no less sure than his, and were filled with admiration for his modesty, as well as being grateful to him as a benefactor for having relieved them of a public nuisance.

A story is told of one of the ancestors of Yoshida, who was even still more renowned for his skill with the bow. When this man, Yoshida Chuemon, was in the suite of Prince Mayeda, of Kanazawa, the party stopped at a certain inn on their way back from Yedo. During the night there proceeded from a thicket behind the inn a weird noise that filled the company with misgivings, and banished all sleep. Prince Mayeda had Yoshida Chuemon summoned and ordered him to shoot directly whence the strange sound issued. Yoshida took his bow and aimed his arrow into the black night towards the sound. The noise ceased immediately and was heard no more. Next morning the people made anxious and careful

investigation, when to their amazement they found the arrow lodged between two bamboo trees that had been creaking in the wind and were doubtless the cause of the inexplicable sound.

Another member of the family, Yoshida Sadayu, was famous for his extraordinary skill with the small bow. Once when one of his fellow warriors had made a new suit of armour and proudly asked Yoshida to test it, the old archer told him to suspend it from the ceiling of the veranda and he would try. Taking a sharply pointed arrow, he let fly, but the shaft failed to pierce the armour. Okada, the owner of the armour, was delighted and went about boasting of its fine quality; so excellent was it that even the famous Yoshida, hearing of this, resolved to humble the too proud Okada, and the next time they met, he proposed that he should be given another trial at the armour. Okada readily consented; he wondered that this time the archer selected a blunt arrow, which, when dispatched, penetrated even the most nearly invulnerable part of the armour, to the great astonishment of Okada. Perplexed at this unexpected turn of affairs, he asked Yoshida to explain, when the latter replied:

"The first time I tried at your request, and I purposely shot an arrow that would not penetrate armour, for I thought it would be greatly to your advantage in battle to feel that your armour was impenetrable, and so it is, to most archers; but when I heard that you were boasting everywhere, to the undervaluation of my skill, that I was unable to put

a shaft through your armour, I felt it my duty to show you the difference and thereby sustain my reputation."

Okada was so deeply impressed, as well as humiliated, by this unusual manner of self-defence that he had the armour hung up as an heirloom, with a card attached to the unmended hole, to the effect that the hole was made by a shaft from the bow of the famous Yoshida Sadayu, the treasure passing down from family to family of the Okada house for many generations.

CONFESSIONS OF TWO MONKS

In the Province of Kii, upon Mount Koya, stands one of the most celebrated Buddhist monasteries in Japan, held in highest veneration by thousands of devout believers, and within its vast compounds hundreds of monks are assembled.

Two of these, strangers to each other, but meeting together in one of the many temples which sanctify Mount Koya, agreed to confess the stories of their lives to each other. Said the first, a worn and wrinkled old man: "In my youth, I bore the proud name of Kasuya Shirozaemon, and was an adherent of *Shogun* Ashikaga Takauji, often attending him personally. I accompanied him on the occasion of his visit to the mansion of a *kuge* (court noble) of high rank, Prince Nijo, in Kyoto, and fell desperately in love with a beautiful young girl, of whom I caught but a glimpse.

"She was one of the princess's maids of honour, and her charms so enamoured me that I fell love-sick, and my master hearing of my state, sent one of my comrades to act as middleman, and request her for my bride.

"It was arranged that we were wed. She loved

me and we were so supremely happy together that I never left her a single hour, when not attending my lord.

"I had been a devout believer in Tenmangu, of Kitano, and had never before neglected my daily worship at the shrine, but my love for Onoye was such that I had almost forgotten my customary worship, my entire devotion being given to her.

"But a festival arrived the 24th of February, and seeing the concourse of devotees reminded me of my neglect, and I resolved to spend the whole night in penance at the shrine, whither I betook myself.

"It was about midnight when a worshipper by my side told me that a frightful crime had just been committed in the neighbourhood; a young woman had been cruelly murdered, her hair cut off, and her body, stripped of clothing, left naked in the street. I shuddered with horror; not merely that produced by a recital of such an atrocious deed, but because I was seized with the dreadful fear that it was my beloved Onoye! In agony I fled from the shrine and rushed madly to the scene, and oh! horror of horrors, cruelty of cruelties, it was really she! It were useless to detail the scene though fresh it still stabs my memory.

"I felt at once that the dire calamity was sent upon me by Tenmangu as punishment for my neglect of worship, and having resolved to become a monk and thereby win back his favour, I repaired to this holy sanctuary where I have for these twenty years served

the divine Buddha; but recollections of the past are forever with me."

Speechless had his brother monk listened throughout the story, and his calm countenance told nothing of his feelings nor of the impression the sad tale made upon him, and without comment he began to recount the narrative of his own wretched career.

"Born in poverty, and reared in crime, my name was a stigma; and my early youth was so steeped in sin and degradation, that my soul was worse starved than my body, and no memory of a single noble impulse is recorded to redeem the dark period of my worldly life, and up to the time the divine light of Buddha was shed upon me I had maintained myself and family by theft and robbery, resorting without the least hesitation to the taking of life, having murdered nearly four hundred helpless victims to obtain their belongings which often amounted to so little that they secured for us but a few days' rations; and if I got anything above the demands of hunger it was recklessly squandered.

"In waiting for some passerby whom I might rob, I had stationed myself by a lonely lane, and had grown impatient, as only a few ragged children had strolled that way on their return from begging at a nearby shrine; but presently I saw a beautiful and richly dressed woman hurrying along, evidently on her way to the same place of worship, and I sprung out and demanded her clothes. I saw that her face was already distressed and tear-stained, but she did not appear terror-stricken, nor cry out; she removed

her outer garment and gave it to me, turning to retrace her steps, but I stepped before her, and demanded the remainder of her clothing. She refused, but I brutally insisted, until seeing her helplessness she implored me to kill her rather than subject her to the indignity and shame of uncovering herself of her inner garment. I drew my sword and dispatched her with a single thrust, availed myself of all she wore, and went hurriedly home to tell my wife of my good luck. She was delighted with all the finery, but upon my describing the youth and beauty of my victim, scolded me that I did not cut off her long tresses, which she said would bring a round sum in gold, and that she would hasten to the spot and get her hair.

"Hardened as I was to crime and the most revolting scenes, a sudden and before unknown repugnance to my inhuman acts sprung within me at my wife's words, and when she had gone to fetch the hair, I was overwhelmed with repentance for all my past, and fled secretly to a priest, shaved my head and became a follower of Buddha, coming later to this monastery.

"I never heard more of my last beautiful victim until this night, for it was I who so pitilessly murdered your beloved wife, and I offer myself up for whatever punishment you will mete out to me, though it be tearing me limb from limb."

But no sign of hatred and revenge was seen in the face of him who was about to speak, and he raised his hand in blessing and said, "Peace; we are brother disciples of the great Buddha, who manifested him-

self in the beautiful maiden through whom he converted two wicked unbelievers." And tears trickled down the sunken and wrinkled cheeks of the two sorrowful monks.

HAYATARO; THE FAITHFUL DOG

About the beginning of Kwansei era (1624–1643) a wonderful event occurred at Tenjinyama in Mitsuke, a post station on the Tokaido. Tenjinyama was then a densely wooded mountain; at the present time few such remain, so that many wonderful and dangerous places have ceased to exist in the country; but in ancient times there were places where no trees had ever been cut down, where strange and monstrous beasts lived and sometimes ran out to the neighboring villages and killed the people.

Tenjinyama was a dreadful place, and the forest was very dark even in the day-time. Far up the mountain was a shrine which the villagers called *Tenjin-no-ya shiro* (Tenjin shrine), but the image worshipped there was not that of Sugawara Michigane, the usual image of Tenjin, but was one called *Yanahime Tenjin.*

In the autumn of the third year of Kwansei, the people of Mitsuke were surprised to see a white feathered arrow fall and stand erect upon the house of a draper named Mitsuboshiya Seibee. Looking at the arrow every one thought it very strange. Just at that time a *hoin* (the name of a rank among Bud-

dhists and *Yamabushi*) happened to pass. As the people were very ignorant they believed that whatever they could not understand, they could learn from a Buddhist priest, so they at once inquired of the *hoin*, as to the meaning of the arrow and he offered a prayer and said:

"A dreadful thing is about to happen. Is there a daughter in that house?"

"Yes," replied the draper, "I have a daughter eighteen years of age."

"The daughter is the person in question," said the *hoin*, "the god of Tenjinyama wishes to receive your daughter. If she is put into a new palanquin and offered to the god, a dire calamity will be averted; but if you grudge your daughter and refuse to grant the god's desire, a great fire will suddenly break out in Mitsuke, and every house will be destroyed. This is a divine revelation."

Hearing the *hoin's* words the people raised a great uproar, and consulted together about the matter, Seibee among them, and he said:

"If all the houses in Mitsuke should burn, it would indeed be a dreadful calamity, and we would be in danger of our lives. Although I feel pity for my daughter, I shall not spare her, but shall offer her to the god that we may escape the disaster."

Seibee and his wife grieved to think that after they with many difficulties, had reared their daughter to eighteen years of age, they must now offer her to the god as a human sacrifice.

On the last day of the festival of the Tenjin god,

the twenty-fifth of December, they had their daughter wear a white garment and a white sash. When she was about to leave her home in the new palanquin, attended by all the towns-people, her father said to her:

"Although you are but a lay woman, you please the god; and now that you go to the shrine to be offered to Tenjin, you must be grateful and attend upon him kindly."

She wept bitterly as she bade her parents and friends farewell, and proceeded with the multitude to Tenjinyama. They reached the shrine at two in the morning, and the maiden was offered to the god and also a libation, *miki* (wine offering, to a god) and *sekihan* (rice boiled with red beans); then they gave a great shout and went down the mountain, leaving the girl to Tenjin.

The following year brought abundant harvests in the fields of the villagers and even to the entire district of Enshu, or Totomi Province, and it was rumoured everywhere that the great crops were due to the fact that Seibee had offered his daughter to the god, a human sacrifice.

Near the end of October the people were startled to see a white feathered arrow fall and stand straight upon the roof of Tokubei's house. Tokubei was the headman of the village, and had a much beloved daughter, Sayo, and he and his family were in great alarm lest this should mean that she must be offered as a sacrifice on December twenty-fifth, just as Seibee's daughter had been.

A faithful man named Chuzo had served in the headman's house for many years, and hearing what had happened was much distressed that such a cruel fate seemed about to befall Miss Sayo, and he pondered deeply over it. He resolved to try and save her, and went secretly every night to the Tenjin shrine, purified his body with cold water, and kneeling before the image said earnestly:

"I pray you to save my master's beloved daughter, and I will dedicate myself as a sacrifice instead. I believe that a god would save one's life rather than take it. I pray you to reveal to me the truth."

For three weeks he prayed thus nightly, and on the twenty-first night he felt exhausted and fell asleep at the shrine. While he slept the image appeared to him in a dream and said: "A monster lives in this mountain and desecrates my shrine; but it is beyond human power to slay it; only Hayataro, in Shinshu, can destroy it. I tell you because you have prayed so fervently."

He awoke instantly upon being thus informed, expressed his sincere thanks to the god, and hastened down the mountain, arriving at the village at daybreak. He went at once to Tokubei and said:

"Dear master, I have received your kindness for many years, and when I heard that Miss Sayo might be made a human sacrifice, I felt great pity and sorrow, and went up the mountain to Tenjin shrine, purified my body with cold water and prayed with all my heart that she should be saved. Last night I received a divine message saying that only Hayataro, in

Shinshu can overcome. So I beg you to search for Hayataro in great haste. He must be a hero who can surely save your daughter."

Hearing his speech Tokubei and his wife and their relatives were in great joy, and they admired and praised Chuzo's fidelity. The master called together the people and explained to them what had happened saying:

"We must search for Hayataro, in Shinshu, and I do not care how much I spend, even if I should become bankrupt, if I can only save my daughter's life, and perhaps others in future."

Men were chosen and parties were sent everywhere in Shinshu. Among them were Yobee and Kinzaimon, who went to the southern part of Shinshu. When they arrived at Shimo-Iwa-machi, they went to a restaurant for refreshment and sat talking as they drank their saké, lamenting their failure to find any trace of the one they sought.

"It is strange," said Kinzaimon, "that I cannot understand why he told his master such a thing."

An old man sat near the two, smoking tobacco. "Well," said he, "you seem to be looking for some one, who is it?"

"Yes," said Kinzaimon, "we are looking for our Hayataro, in Shinshu."

"What is he?" asked the old man.

"I think he is a fencing master, or a hero having great strength," replied Kinzaimon.

"I have lived in Shinshu just sixty-eight years," said the old man, "and I know every man here, but

there is none named Hayataro; but I know of a dog by that name."

"A dog!" cried Kinzaimon, "where is it?"

"There is a village called Akabomura three miles from here," said the old man, "and in that village is a Buddhist temple named Hosekizan Kwozenji, and at the temple is a very strange dog named Hayataro."

"What do you mean by strange?" asked Kinzaimon.

"It is not a common dog," replied the old man, "and there is a strange story concerning it."

"Tell us the story," pleaded Kinzaimon, "it may be this dog we seek."

"Years ago, a wolf was seen prowling about the temple at times, and one morning the rector found her under the veranda with seven wolf-dog whelps. He thought it a strange thing and on the seventh night gave the wolf rice boiled with red beans. Not long afterwards, the rector dreamed the wolf came to him and said: 'I am leaving the temple now, and wish to thank you very much for your kindness.'

"'If you have a mind to express your thanks,' he replied, 'you may leave a whelp for the temple.'

"The next morning he looked for the wolf, but she was not there, and he was amazed to find that one of the whelps had been left behind.

"When he called it, it came out and ran to him wagging its tail; he named it Hayataro, and the dog grew to be very large and has always remained at

the temple, though there have been several different rectors.

"Only recently Hayataro rescued a young girl who was attacked by some monster as she prayed at her mother's grave on the one hundredth night after her death, and the villagers praised the dog and called him the Honourable Hayataro of Kwozenji."

The two men wondered at the old man's narrative, and Yobee said: "We will go to Kwozenji and beg the rector to lend us the dog." And they requested the old man to show them the way. When they reached the temple they told the rector their errand and related what had happened in Tenjinyama and the information gained by Chuzo, the rector gladly consenting to let them take Hayataro. He called the dog and said:

"Hayataro, you may now go to Misuke and take upon yourself the important task of saving a human life. If you are successful you will no doubt be born a human being in future life. I give you the Buddhist invocation—Namu-Amida-butsu, Namu-Amida-butsu, Namu-Amida-butsu."

After thanking the rector the two men set out to return to Mitsuke with Hayataro. Other parties had already reached there reporting that no person by the name of Hayataro could be found in any place where they had been, so that Tokubei and all were overjoyed when Kinzaimon and Yobee came bringing Hayataro, and told his story.

When the last day of the Tenjin festival arrived again, Hayataro was put in a fine new palanquin

made of *hinoki* and hung with *shimenawa*, and the multitude ascended the mountain with the palanquin as before, Chuzo among them. Arrived at the shrine, the palanquin was placed within, the lamps lighted and offerings presented. The people stood by and said: "We offer a daughter of Tokubei, the headman of the town, obeying your order; and we pray earnestly that next year our harvest may be abundant and that there may be no evils in our village." And they clapped their hands and retired from the place.

But Chuzo remained and crept under the veranda of the shrine and prayed that the monster might be destroyed. As he prayed he heard heavy footsteps and presently the sound of breaking wood and unearthly shrieks. But the lights had gone out and he could see nothing. He knew that the monster must have come to destroy things and he trembled in fear, but he continued to pray till day dawned, wondering whether Hayataro had killed the beast, for the noise had ceased.

Chuzo was just creeping out when some of the townspeople approached and he called out to them, and told them what he had heard. They entered the shrine and found lying dead upon the floor a huge orangoutang and beside him Hayataro wounded and bleeding.

They placed him carefully in the broken palanquin and carried him back to Mitsuke, summoning a physician to attend him; but his wounds were too deep and death soon came to relieve him.

The people rejoiced that Tokubei's daughter had been saved and perhaps many others, but they were grieved that the rector's fine dog had been killed, and they decided to transcribe the Dai-Hannya (Buddhist sacred books) with his blood and say prayers for Hayataro forever. And when the Dai-Hannya was written they carried it to the rector and told him the sad tale and he said: "Ah! Hayataro, you have done well, as I might have expected of you." And a sepulcher was built for him, and the Dai-Hannya held as a treasure in the temple to this day.

HIDAKAGAWA

"That's the man we have selected for your husband," said Shoji Manago to his daughter, as she inquired who the visitor might be. Shoji was a man of wealth and position, and the girl was his only daughter, whom he cherished as the apple of his eye; and his reply to her query was a joke, though the maiden was loath to take it as such; for the guest was a handsome young priest from Mutsu, now on a pilgrimage to the famous shrine of Kumano in Kishu.

With the girl it was evidently a case of love at first sight, for she could not get it out of her head that the visitor was to be her own some day. She pondered the parental joke as a welcome suggestion, and cherished the idea in her heart until her love for the priest knew no bounds. It can only be inferred that she never realized it was said in jest; for after waiting some time the girl approached the young priest and inquired how long he intended keeping her in suspense.

Surprised beyond measure and blushing with shame the youth endeavoured to escape; but the girl would have him face the question, when he explained that his vows, alas, forbade him the joys of marriage.

This the lass would not hear of; for her breast was bursting with affection, a passion that must be returned. The priest saw that she was in a sort of frenzy unlike the fashion of ordinary women, and he tried to soothe her with fair words and happy suggestions, since it was part of his profession to ease the consciences and console the souls of men.

Then the very first opportunity, he escaped and betook himself away as fast as he could. It was under cover of darkness that he managed to leave the house, and he fled unseen with footsteps as light as a hind's; and only when safely distant, did he pause and relax his gait. Crossing the river Hidaka the novice came to the Dojoji temple, and unburdened his stricken soul to the old priest in charge. A woman had attempted to ensnare him, and he besought help that he might be delivered from her charms.

The priest and his assistants all duly sympathized with one so unfortunate as to win the affection of a woman. But there was no time to discuss the matter, important as it was; for the jilted lady was on his track and probably would soon overtake him. What was to be done? If he remained in the temple the priests could not deny that he was there. He must be spirited away somehow. One went out to reconnoitre and lo, there was the forsaken maid making toward the temple with all speed, and there was no time to be lost. So the priests slipped the fugitive under a big bell, and calmly awaited the approach of the lady.

The girl in her search had forded the swollen waters of Hidakagawa; and now with wet and bedraggled skirts she hailed the lolling priests and demanded the whereabouts of her lost one. In despair at their evasive replies the maid turned again to the river, plunged in and came out in the form of a dragon.

Now crawling heavily toward the temple again the ponderous beast glided through the precincts, crushing the pebbles and smearing the grass, the sound of its breath and the movements of its body falling upon the ear like a breaking wave. The priests disappeared in terror and feared for the safety of themselves and the temple, for disappointed love is worse than a fury, and more terrible than hell. Sniffing about with gaping jaws the dragon soon scented the refugee under the bell. The dragon tried to raise the bell, but it was a bell as mighty in size as in tone, and refused to move. The dragon now began to show indications of anger; and when a dragon is angry, one may expect trouble. Whirling and cart-whipping about the bell the weird beast threw its huge body against the metal, its scales resounding thereon like thunderclaps, and the forest echoed with the commotion. Doubling up its back like an angry cat the dragon now concentrated its breath upon the bell and blew fire against it as a blast furnace, every now and then lashing the bell with the end of its stony tail to see if the metal was softening.

The poor priest within felt his hiding place get hotter and hotter, until it was beyond the heat of an

oven. He melted, first with perspiration accentuated by fear, until the temperature was above boiling, when the perspiration evaporated in a hurry, and he was baked to a crisp. When the bell finally reached the point of dissolution and flowed into a clinker the lover was but an atom in the new alloy. Seeing that her love had been allowed to go beyond bounds and had consumed even what she loved, the dragon melted away toward the river where it sank bubbling to the bottom like an ingot of red hot steel, and was no more.

But the legend thereof is not yet dead; for it is a tale of love, whose tales never grow old, even in Japan. And the tale, like all others of Buddhist origin, has a moral; and the moral is this: "Beware of the unwonted woman who wants you; for what is an angel without might be a devil within!"

So dignified a being as man, of course, never stoops to the absurdity of falling in love; but woman sometimes *does*, she being the weaker sex; and when she does, then look out.

Some poet set the legend into song, a beautiful lyric of the Ashikaga period, a lyric more dramatic than any of Browning's. Perhaps it would be more in consonance with art to call it an operetta, and the tale is so amplified as to throw interesting side-lights on the life of the time.

One of these is to the effect that when the priests undertook the casting of a new bell for the temple, the spirit of the dead maiden returned in the form of a beautiful dancing girl, thinking that soft, sweet

beauty might have a better effect than fierce love-anger as a means of rescuing life from the bitter ashes of the past. But as it was a repentance too late, the fair one again became angry and the casting was a failure. But the prayers of the priests ultimately subdued her, since prayer is more mighty than passion; and the soul of the lost maiden fled into the body of some dragon. If one desires to see the legend well represented on the stage one must attend a performance of the old *No*-drama known as the Hida-kagawa; and there can be seen the fair maid, flower-draped and rising from the bell from which she emerges as a demon, whose subsequent tactics are truly demoniacal. Then come the prayers of the priests, which are all duly answered by obedient gods; and one experiences the faith-confirming spectacle of witnessing an actual answer to prayer. A tale so typical of the days of myths was not left only to *No*-dancers; it has been dramatized for the stage of the common theatre, the *shibai*, wherein the various characters are all vividly drawn and the action most mysterious and animated, presenting one of the most gorgeous histrionic displays to be seen on the Japanese stage.

THE SWORD

The following anecdote concerns Nagasone Kotetsu Nyudo Okisato. In the first year of Teiryo (1584), the sword made by Kotetsu and wielded by Inaba Iwami-no-kami Masayoshi killed the Tairo or Premier of the Tokugawa Government, Hotta Chikuzen-no-kami. It had been made to the special order in Inaba, and was of a length suitable for court use. Its blade was one foot, nine inches long. On the morning of the day of the assassination, Inaba was taking breakfast, when an attendant surgeon paying him a visit was shown a weapon. The surgeon admired it, and expressed the opinion that no man could recover from a wound made by such a sword. Listening to this, Inaba smiled and said nothing.

Later, Inaba, who was in the Castle of Yedo, which is now the Imperial Palace, sent a messenger for Hotta, the Tairo, asking him to come for a consultation. As soon as Hotta arrived in the room, Inaba walked up to him, and holding up the Premier's right arm, stabbed him in the side, the sword penetrating upwards and coming out of the body from the left shoulder. Inaba also fell, as the unfortunate Tairo

sank to the floor. Okubo Kaga-no-kami, rushing into the room, cut at Inaba, who cried out, "Do what you like!" and continued holding the handle of his sword, the blade of which was up to the hilt in the Tairo's body. Then Toda Yamashiro-no-kami and Abe Bungo-no-kami rushed in, and all three set upon and slew Inaba Iwami-ni-kami Masayoshi.

Now what was the cause of this tragic act? None other than the fact that the Tairo Hotta had become over-powerful in the Government of Tsunayoshi the Shogun. It was at Hotta's recommendation that Tsunayoshi was elected Shogun, but, as is the way of men, Hotta presumed upon his power. Many were those who would smile at his fall, and among them was Inaba.

Japanese history is full of acts similar to that of Inaba, who determined to sacrifice himself for the Shogun. It is related as evidence that the assassination was in no way due to any private concern; that the day before, Inaba paid a visit to the Tairo (of whom he was a relation), drank saké with him, and engaged in friendly talk. On the last day also, Inaba ordered many borrowed books to be rèturned to his teacher, Ito Zinsai, a Kyoto scholar of renown.

Mito Mitsukuni, of the famous Mito branch of the Tokugawa family, severely condemned the three lords for killing Inaba when he offered no resistance. Following this incident, the names of Kotetsu and Inaba became household words throughout Japan. At the Imperial Theatre, in December last year, the play of Nagasome Kotetsu purported to express the

swordsmith's character, but as a matter of fact no such incident as portrayed on the stage occurred in Kotetsu's life. Many stories, however, are told of this master craftsman.

One autumnal evening, when the moon was high and bright, Kotetsu took a walk to Benkeibashi. Proud of his workmanship he compared the moon in her brilliancy with his swords in their sharpness. He drew his weapon and cut the bronze giboshi, the decoration on the bridge rail, to the depth of four inches, and then quickly returned home.

Kotetsu was born at Nagasome Muro, in Omi Province, and from this fact we obtain a clue to the lengthy name by which he is often indicated—Nagasone Kotetsu Nyudo Okisato. He served apprenticeship to an armour-maker, and having learned sword making from Yasutsuga, came up to Yedo and lived in Hanabatake, Uyeno. Among his patrons were Inaba Iwami-no-kami, the lord of Mito Tokugawa Mitsukuni, and the lord of Moriyama, another Tokugawa. Among the several hundred swordsmiths who have flourished since Keicho (at the end of the 16th century) Kotetsu ranks high in the estimation of the modern collector. A good workman, whatever be his craft, will always find imitators, and inferior craftsmen have made "Kotetsu swords" and many dealers have sold them. One such imitator, Kajihei, lived in Yushima, Hongo, whose base reputation was built upon his skill in forging Kotetsu's signature. While as an honest smith he could make only a couple of bu of cash a day (half

a ryo), by imitating the master's signature he could easily double his income. In the circumstances, it is little wonder that many Kotetsu imitations exist.

Another story of Kotetsu, which is worth retelling as revealing the intense pride of the old Japanese in a good weapon, relates that a samurai, visiting the shop of an armour-maker, said a blade could not be worth much, whereupon the impulsive Kotetsu seized one of his own weapons and slew him on the spot.

The best tribute to Kotetsu lies in a story dealing with the troublous times in Kyoto, just before the restoration of the young Emperor Meiji. In the spring of the third year of Bunkyu (1863), the Shogun Iyemochi Tokugawa visited the capital to pay his respects to the Emperor. A famous fencer, Kondo Isamu, was honoured by appointment as commander of the Shogun's bodyguard, a body of troops known as the Shincho-gumi. Kondo sent for a sword dealer and explained his new and heavy responsibility, for there were in Kyoto groups of ronin and other self-styled loyalists opposed to the Shogun and jealous for the Emperor's honour, who were also bitter advocates of the exclusion of all foreigners. Civil war on a large scale might break out at any time. With all the samurai's faith in a good weapon, Kondo wanted Kotetsu, regardless of price. The dealer said he knew of one, and after three days provided the weapon. Kondo, who was no particular judge, accepted it, and paid the dealer fifty ryo.

The Shogun returned to Yedo after a year's stay in the capital. This was the spring of the first year

of Genji (1864). Kyoto was then in a ferment. Matsudaira Katamochi, Lord of Aidzu, was the Shogo-shoku, or Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Guard, and Kondo and Hijikata Sanza were ordered to stay in Kyoto to assist in policing the capital. On June 5, 1864, men of the Shincho-gumi arrested a ronin suspect who, after severe torture, confessed that groups of his comrades were plotting to start fires in different parts of the capital, with the object of seizing the person of the Emperor in the confusion, and carrying him to Choshu.

The headquarters of the ronin having been revealed, Kondo made arrangements for a combined attack. Two houses were surrounded at eight o'clock, and at ten the attack began. After a severe struggle, seven of the ronin were found killed, four seriously wounded, while 22 were arrested. The Commander-in-Chief rewarded the Shincho-gumi with a gift of 500 ryo, and made a present of a sword to Kondo, their commander.

Six years passed, during which time Kondo fought in the battles of the period. One day he sent a message to the sword dealer, saying he wished to see him in connection with the weapon bought six years before. The dealer, astonished and terrified, fearing it was discovered the sword was an imitation, went at once to Kajihei, of Yushima, a forger of Kotetsu signatures. Kajihei said the dealer had defrauded the samurai for gain, an offence punishable by death, while he only made Kotetsu's signatures, but did not sell the swords—a pretty moral distinction. The

trembling dealer, prepared to lose his life, went to Kondo's house, and to his surprise and relief, was received gratefully. Kondo expressed the opinion that the sword he had bought was a good Kotetsu, and showed his appreciation by making the dealer a present of five ryo and a lot of saké—a gift in which, we may be sure, the crooked merchant Kajihei did not share.

UNGO-ZENJI

From "Tales of the Samurai"

It was snowing fast.

Already as far as eye could see the world was covered with a vast silvery sheet. Hill and dale, tree and field, all alike clothed in virgin white.

Caring nothing for the bitter cold, but loving the beautiful, Daté Masamuné determined to go out to enjoy the scene. Accordingly, accompanied by a few attendants, he wended his way to a pavilion set on a low hill in the castle grounds whence an extensive view, embracing the whole of his little fief of Osaki, could be obtained.

In later life Masamuné distinguished himself by signal service rendered to the state, eventually becoming one of the greatest daimios in Japan, under Iyeyasu, the first Shogun, but at this time Osaki was his sole estate, and his income did not exceed 100,000 *koku* of rice a year.

"What an enchanting picture! What can compare with a snow landscape?" he exclaimed, as he stood enraptured, gazing with delight from the balcony of the pavilion at the pure loveliness of the scene before him. "It is said that snow foretells a fruitful year. When the harvest is abundant great is the

rejoicing of the people, and peace and prosperity reign over the land!"

While his lordship thus soliloquized, Heishiro, the sandal-bearer—Makabé Heishiro as he was called from his birthplace, Makabé in Hitachi, a surname being a luxury unknown to the third estate—waited without. Having adjusted his master's footgear there was nothing more to do till he should come out again. But presently Heishiro observed that the snowflakes fell and lay somewhat thick on his valuable charge. He hastened to brush them off with his sleeve, but more flakes fell, and again the *geta* (clogs) were covered with icy particles.

"This will never do," he said to himself. "His lordship disdains to wear *tabi* (socks) even in the coldest weather, deeming it a mark of effeminacy; should he place his bare feet on these damp *geta* he will assuredly catch cold. I must keep them warm and dry for him."

So the good fellow in the kindness of his simple heart took up the heavy wooden clogs, and putting them in the bosom of his garment next his skin, continued his patient waiting.

"His lordship comes!"

Heishiro had just time to put the *geta* straight on the large stone step at the entrance before the double doors slid open right and left and Masamuné appeared, young, imperious.

He slipped his feet on to the *geta*. How was this? They felt warm to his touch! How could that be in such freezing weather? There could be but one ex-

planation. That lazy lout of a sandal-bearer had been using them as a seat—sitting on the honourable footgear of his august master! The insufferable insolence of the fellow!

In a passion at the supposed insult he caught the offender by the nape of his neck, and shook him violently, exclaiming between his set teeth, "You scoundrel! How dared you defile my *geta* by sitting on them! You have grossly insulted me behind my back! Villain, take that. . . ."

Catching up one of the clogs which he had kicked off, he struck the poor servitor a heavy blow between the eyes, which caused him to reel stunned and bleeding to the ground. Then hurling the companion *geta* at his prostrate victim, he strode proudly back to the castle, barefooted, for he was in too great a rage to wait until another pair of *geta* could be brought.

No one stayed to look after Heishiro. None cared what became of him. For some time he lay as he had fallen, but presently the cold brought him back to consciousness, and he rose slowly and with difficulty to his feet.

He picked up the *geta* with which he had been struck, and with tears mingling with the blood on his face gazed at it mournfully for a few moments. Then, as the thought of his master's injustice came over him, he gnashed his teeth in impotent rage.

"Haughty brute, that you are, Masamuné," he muttered, "you shall pay for this! The bond between us as lord and vassal has snapped for ever. I have been one of the most devoted of your humble

servants, but now I will never rest till I have had my revenge on you for this cruel treatment!"

Then Heishiro again put the *geta* into his bosom, though with how different an intention from before, and descending the hill on the side furthest from the castle, limped painfully away.

From that time forth the man had but one idea—to wreak condign vengeance on the arrogant noble who had so abused his kindness.

But Masamuné was a daimio, though a poor one, while Heishiro was only a serf. Assassination was impossible, Masamuné being always well guarded even while he slept, besides possessing considerable bodily strength himself. He must have recourse to other and subtler means. He thought long and deeply. There were only two persons of higher rank than the daimio who could affect his position at will —the Emperor and the Shogun. But how could a man of Heishiro's standing gain the ear of either of these two illustrious personages so as to slander Masamuné and influence them against him? The very idea was absurd! True, it was a warlike age and promotion speedily followed the achievement of a deed of valor; with a spear in his hand and a good horse under him one might rise to almost any height. But Heishiro was no soldier and his physical strength was small. With a sigh he admitted to himself that the accomplishment of his purpose did not lie that way.

And then a happy thought struck him. He remembered that any one, high or low, great or small, could become a priest and that the prospects held out

in that profession were boundless. There was no distinction to which a man of the lowliest parentage and the weakest body might not aspire. A learned priest with a reputation for sanctity might get access to Court—gain the notice of the Emperor himself!

That was it!

Heishiro resolved to turn priest, and with this in view made all haste to Kyoto, where he entered the Temple of Ungoji in Higashiyama as an acolyte.

But the career of an acolyte is none of the easiest. Before he can be received into the priesthood he must go through all forms of asceticism, self-denial, and penance. Furthermore, he has to serve his superiors as a drudge, doing the most menial tasks at their command. Heishiro had a very hard time of it. A man of ordinary perseverance might have succumbed and given up. Not so Heishiro. Not for a moment did he dream of abandoning his self-imposed task. He was determined as long as there was life in him to endure every hardship and humiliation, so that eventually he might attain his end. Still he was but human, and there were times when his weary body almost gave way and his spirit flagged. His racked nerves seemed as if they could bear no more. At such times he would look in a mirror at the reflection of the deep scar on his brow, and draw from its place of concealment the odd garden *geta*, saying to himself, "Courage! Remember Masamuné! Your work is not done yet."

Then strength and calmness would return and he once more felt equal to labour and endure.

Little by little Heishiro rose in the favour of his superiors, and his learning showed marked progress. At length, he thought he might get on faster if he went to another monastery, and the Temple of Enryakuji on Mt. Hiei being the largest and most renowned of all places of sacred teaching in Japan, he applied there for admission and was readily admitted.

Twenty years later, Jōben, for that was the name Heishiro took on entering the priesthood, was known far and near for his erudition and strict application to all observances of a life of the most austere piety. But he was not satisfied. He was still very far from being in a position to attract the notice of the Emperor. Yet higher must he climb. To be world-famous was his aim.

So he made up his mind to go over to China, justly regarded as the fountain-head of all knowledge and wisdom. All she could impart of the Buddhistic faith he would acquire. As soon as an opportunity offered Jōben sailed from his native shores and found himself among a strange people. Here he remained ten years. During that time he visited many famous temples and gathered wisdom from many sources. At last the fame of the traveller reached the ear of the Chinese Emperor, who was pleased to grant him an audience, and graciously bestowed on him a new sacerdotal name, that of Issan-Kasho-Daizenji. Thus it came about that Jōben left his country acknowledged, indeed, to be a wise and holy man, but he came back to be regarded as the foremost divine in Japan.

After his return Issan-Kasho-Daizenji stayed at Ungo-ji, the temple in Kyoto where he had entered on his noviciate. He had heard nothing of Masamuné for some years and was anxious to learn what had become of him. He was unpleasantly surprised to hear that the object of his hatred had also risen in the world, and that as lord of the Castle of Sendai he was considered one of the most important men of the day. Not only did he hold a high office at Court, but as the head of the North-Eastern daimios, even the Shogun had to treat him with respect. All this was annoying if nothing worse. The Zenji saw that he would have to bide his time and act warily. A false move now might render futile all his long years of travail.

But after all he did not have to wait very long.

The Emperor was taken ill and his malady was of so serious a nature that the skill of the wisest physicians proved of no avail. The highest officials of the Imperial Household met in solemn conclave to discuss the matter and it was decided that earthly means being vain the only hope lay in an appeal to Heaven.

Who was the priest of character so stainless, of wisdom so profound that he might be entrusted with this high mission?

One name rose to all lips—"Issan-Kasho-Daizenji!"

With all speed, therefore, the holy man was summoned to the Palace and ordered to pray his hardest to the Heavenly Powers for the restoration to health of the Imperial patient.

For seven days and seven nights the Zenji isolated

himself from all mankind in the Hall of the Blue Dragon. For seven days and seven nights he fasted, and prayed that the precious life might be spared. And his prayers were heard. At the end of that time the Emperor took a turn for the better, and so rapid was his recovery that in a very short time all cause of anxiety about him was over.

His Majesty's gratitude knew no bounds. The Zenji was honoured with many marks of the Imperial regard, and as a consequence, all the ministers and courtiers vied with each other in obsequiousness to the favourite of the Emperor. He was appointed Head of the Ungoji Temple, and received yet another name, Ungo-Daizenji.

"The attainment of my desire is now within reach!" thought the priest exultantly. "It only remains to find a plausible pretext for accusing Masamuné of high treason."

But more than thirty years had elapsed since Makabé Heishiro, the lowly sandal-bearer, had vowed vengeance on the daimio Daté Masamuné, and not without effect had been his delving into holy scriptures, his long vigils, his life of asceticism and meditation. Heishiro had become Ungo-Daizenji, a great priest. His character had undergone a radical change, though he had not suspected it. His mind had been purified and was now incapable of harbouring so mean and paltry a feeling as a desire for revenge. Now that the power was in his grasp he no longer cared to exercise it.

"To hate, or to try to injure a fellow-creature is

below one who has entered the priesthood," he said to himself. "The winds of passion disturb only those who move about the maze of the secular world. When a man's spiritual eyes are opened, neither east nor west, neither north nor south exists—such things are but illusions. I have nursed a grudge against Lord Daté for over thirty years, and with the sole object of revenge before my eyes have raised myself to my present position. But if Lord Daté had not ill-treated me on a certain occasion, what would my life have been? I should, probably, have remained Heishiro, the sandal-bearer, all my days. But my lord had the unkindness to strike me with a garden *geta* without troubling himself to find out whether I deserved such chastisement. I was roused to anger and vowed to be revenged. Because of my resolve to punish him I turned priest, studied hard, endured privations, and so, at length, have become one of the most influential priests in the Empire, before whom even princes and nobles bow with reverence. If I look at the matter in its true light it is to Lord Daté that I owe everything. In olden times Sakya Muni, turning his back upon earthly glory, climbed Mt. Kantoku and there served his novitiate with St. Arara. Prince though he was, he performed all menial offices for his master, who if ever the disciple seemed negligent, would beat him with a cane. 'How mortifying it is,' thought the Royal neophyte, 'that I, born to a throne, should be treated thus by one so far beneath me in rank.' But Sakya Muni was a man of indomitable spirit. The more humilia-

tions he had to suffer the more earnestly did he apply himself to his religious studies, so that, at the early age of thirty he had learnt all his teacher could impart, and himself began to teach, introducing to the world one of the greatest religions it has ever known. It may truthfully be said that Sakya's success was largely, if not wholly, due to that stern and relentless master who allowed no shirking of his work. Far be it from me to institute any comparison between my humble self and the holy Founder of Buddhism, but, nevertheless, I cannot deny the fact that the pavilion in the grounds of Osaki Castle was my Mt. Dantoku, and this old garden *geta* my St. Arara's cane. Therefore, it should be gratitude, not revenge, that I have in my heart for Masamuné, for it was his unconsidered act that laid the foundation of my prosperity."

Thus the good priest relinquished his long cherished idea of vengeance, and a better feeling took its place. He now looked upon the blood-stained *geta* with reverence, offering flowers and burning incense before it, while day and night he prayed fervently for the long life and happiness of his old master, Lord Daté Masamuné.

And Masamuné himself?

As stated above he attained great honours and became a leading man in the councils of his country. But at the age of sixty-three he tired of public life and retired to pass the evening of his days at his Castle of Sendai. Here, to employ his leisure, he set about the restoration of the well-known temple of Zuiganji, at Matsushima, in the vicinity of the castle,

which during a long period of civil strife had fallen into decay being in fact a complete ruin. Masamuné took it upon himself to restore the building to its former rich splendour, and then when all was done looked about for a priest of deep learning and acknowledged virtue who should be worthy to be placed in charge of it.

At a gathering of his chief retainers he addressed them as follows:—

"As you know I have rebuilt and decorated the Zuiganji Temple in this vicinity, but it still remains without a Superior. I desire to entrust it to a holy and learned man who will carry on its ancient traditions as a seat of piety. Tell me, who is the greatest priest of the day?"

Ungo-Zenji, High Priest of the Ungoji Temple in Kyoto is undoubtedly the greatest priest of the day," came the unanimous reply.

So Masamuné decided to offer the vacant post to the holy Ungo-Daizenji, but as the priest in question was a favourite at Court, and enjoyed the confidence of the Emperor, it was necessary that His Majesty should first be approached before anything was said to Zenji. Masamuné tendered his petition in due form and as a personal favour to himself. The Emperor who retained a warm affection for the retired statesman, readily assented, and thus it came about that Ungo-Zenji was appointed Head of the Zuiganji Temple in the beautiful district of Matsushima.

On the seventh day after his installation, Masamuné paid a formal call at the Zuiganji to welcome

the new arrival. He was ushered into the private guest-room of the Zenji which was at the moment unoccupied. On turning to the alcove his attention was at once arrested by the sight of an old garden *geta* placed on a valuable stand of elaborate and costly workmanship.

"What celebrated personage has used that *geta?*" said the astonished Masamuné to himself. "But surely it is a breach of etiquette to decorate a room with such a lowly article when about to receive a Daimio of my standing! However, the priest has doubtless some purpose in allowing so strange an infringement of good manners."

At that moment the sliding doors opened noiselessly, and a venerable man in full canonicals and bearing a holy brush of long white hair in his hand, came in. His immobile face was that of an ascetic but marred by a disfiguring scar on his forehead between the eyes.

Ungo-Zenji, for he it was, seated himself opposite his guest and putting both hands, palm downwards, on the mats bowed several times in respectful greeting, Masamuné returning the courtesy with due ceremony.

When the salutations were over, Masamuné could no longer restrain his curiosity.

"Your Reverence," he began, "in compliance with my earnest request you have condescended to come down to this insignificant place to take charge of our temple. I am profoundly impressed by your goodness and know not how to thank you. I am a

plain man and unskilled in words. But, your Reverence, there are two things which puzzle me, and though at this our first interview you may deem it a want of good breeding to be so inquisitive, may I ask you to explain the place of honour given to a garden *geta*, and the scar on your brow that accords so ill with your reputation for saintliness?"

At these words, poured out with the impetuosity he remembered in Masamuné as a young man, the priest smiled a little. Then he withdrew to the lower end of the apartment and with tears glistening in his sunken eyes, said:—

"How rejoiced I am to see your face again. To gaze upon your unchanged features reminds me of the days of my long past youth."

"What, your words are strange! How can I remind you of your youth, when, to my knowledge, we never met till this day?"

"My lord, have patience, and I will explain all," replied the Zenji. "In those days I was but a servant—a sandal-bearer known as Makabé Heishiro—it is not likely so humble an individual would retain a place in your memory. It was when you were residing at the Castle of Osaki. . . ."

He paused, but Masamuné, too amazed to utter a word, only looked intently at his former servant as if trying to recall having ever seen him before.

So Ungo-Zenji went on with his story, and in detail told all that had befallen him since that snowy day more than thirty years before. He did not spare himself, but told how through all those years he had

been actuated by a feeling of revenge and revenge only, and how the thought of some day seeing his enemy in the dust had been the spur to goad him on to conquer all difficulties, to surmount every obstacle.

"At length," concluded the priest, "I came under the notice of the Emperor who so magnified a trifling service that he loaded me with rewards and marks of favour. 'Now is my time!' I thought. But to my own astonishment I found that so vile a passion no longer existed in my nature—the desire for revenge had fled. I began to view the affair in a different light, and to look upon you as my benefactor. But for you I should still be a sandal-bearer—but for you the stores of knowledge at my command would never have come within my reach—but for you the intercourse I have had with the illustrious and sage men of two countries would have been an impossibility. Therefore, my hatred is turned to gratitude, my wish for vengeance to a heartfelt desire for your long life and prosperity. I pray daily that some day I may be enabled in some small measure to requite the inestimable benefits I owe to you. Your lordship now understands why I so treasure an old *geta*, and how it is I bear this ugly scar on my brow."

Masamuné listened to the narrative with growing wonder and the deepest attention. At its conclusion he rose and taking the Zenji by both hands gently, but forcibly drew him to the upper end of the apartment. When both were again seated he spoke.

"Your Reverence," he said in a voice full of emo-

tion. "What you have just told me quite puts me out of countenance. I can just recall the incident of which you speak and I remember how angry I felt at what in my arrogance I deemed a gross insult. I do not wonder at your desire for revenge, but, that you should renounce the triumph that was yours for the asking—that, indeed, amazes me! Such magnanimity is almost incredible! You prove to me that religion is not the empty abstraction some call it, and I humbly beg your pardon for my past offence, and request you to enroll me as one of your disciples."

In this way, Masamuné who was of a frank and noble disposition repented of the fault committed in his youth, and the sandal-bearer achieved a greater victory than he could have boasted of had he caused his enemy to die a shameful death.

A hearty friendship sprang up between the two generous-minded men, and till death parted them many years later they saw much of each other and their affection grew. The priest was always a welcome guest at the Castle, while with earnest piety, Masamuné prosecuted his studies in sacred lore under the guidance of Ungo-Zenji.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE HARA-KIRI

From A. B. Mitford's "Tales of Old Japan"

(Written about 1870)

Seppuku (hara-kiri) is the mode of suicide adopted amongst Samurai when they have no alternative but to die. Some there are who thus commit suicide of their own free will; others there are who, having committed some crime which does not put them outside the pale of the privileges of the Samurai class, are ordered by their superiors to put an end to their own lives. It is needless to say that it is absolutely necessary that the principal, the witnesses, and the seconds who take part in the affair should be acquainted with all the ceremonies to be observed. A long time ago, a certain Daimio invited a number of persons, versed in the various ceremonies, to call upon him to explain the different forms to be observed by the official witnesses who inspect and verify the head, etc., and then to instruct him in the ceremonies to be observed in the act of suicide; then he showed all these rites to his son and to all his retainers. Another person has said that, as the ceremonies to be gone through by principal, witnesses, and seconds are all very important matters, men

should familiarize themselves with a thing which is so terrible, in order that, should the time come for them to take part in it, they may not be taken by surprise.

The witnesses go to see and certify the suicide. For seconds, men are wanted who have distinguished themselves in the military arts. In old days, men used to bear these things in mind; but nowadays the fashion is to be ignorant of such ceremonies, and if upon rare occasions a criminal is handed over to a Diamio's charge, that he may perform *hara-kiri*, it often happens, at the time of execution, that there is no one among all the prince's retainers who is competent to act as second, in which case a man has to be engaged in a hurry from some other quarter to cut off the head of the criminal, and for that day he changes his name and becomes a retainer of the prince, either of the middle or lowest class, and the affair is entrusted to him, and so the difficulty is got over; nor is this considered to be a disgrace. It is a great breach of decorum if the second who is a most important officer, commits any mistake (such as not striking off the head at a blow) in the presence of the witnesses sent by the Government. On this account a skilful person must be employed; and, to hide the unmanliness of his own people, a prince must perform the ceremony in this imperfect manner. Every Samurai should be able to cut off a man's head; therefore, to have to employ a stranger to act as second is to incur the charge of ignorance of the arts of war, and is a bitter mortification. However, young men,

trusting to their youthful ardour, are apt to be careless, and are certain to make a mistake. Some people there are who, not lacking in skill on ordinary occasions, lose their presence of mind in public, and cannot do themselves justice. It is all the more important, therefore, as the act occurs but rarely, that men who are liable to be called upon to be either principals or seconds or witnesses in the *hara-kiri* should constantly be examined in their skill as swordsmen, and should be familiar with all the rites, in order that when the time comes they may not lose their presence of mind.

According to one authority, capital punishment may be divided into two kinds—beheading and strangulation. The ceremony of *hara-kiri* was added afterwards in the case of persons belonging to the military class being condemned to death. This was first instituted in the days of the Ashikaga[1] dynasty. At that time the country was in a state of utter confusion; and there were men who, although fighting, were neither guilty of high treason nor of infidelity to their feudal lords, but who by the chances of war were taken prisoners. To drag out such men as these, bound as criminals, and cut their heads off, was intolerably cruel; accordingly, men hit upon a ceremonious mode of suicide by disembowelling, in order to com-

[1] Ashikaga, third dynasty of Shoguns, flourished from 1336 to 1568 A.D. The practice of suicide by disembowelling is of great antiquity. This is the time when the ceremonies attending it were invented.

fort the departed spirit. Even at present, where it becomes necessary to put to death a man who has been guilty of some act not unworthy of a Samurai, at the time of the execution witnesses are sent to the house; and the criminal, having bathed and put on new clothes, in obedience to the commands of his superiors, puts an end to himself, but does not on that account forfeit his rank as a Samurai. This is a law for which, in all truth, men should be grateful.

In the old days the ceremony of *hara-kiri* used to be performed in a temple. In the third year of the period called Kan-yei (A.D. 1626), a certain person, having been guilty of treason, was ordered to disembowel himself, on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the temple of Kichijôji, at Komagomé, in Yedo. Eighteen years later, the retainer of a certain Daimio, having had a dispute with a sailor belonging to an Osaka coasting-ship, killed the sailor; and, an investigation having been made into the matter by the Governor of Osaka, the retainer was ordered to perform *hara-kiri*, on the twentieth day of the sixth month, in the temple called Sokusanji, in Osaka. During the period Shôhô (middle of seventeenth century), a certain man, having been guilty of heinous misconduct, performed *hara-kiri* in the temple called Shimpukuji, in the Kôji-street of Yedo. On the fourth day of the fifth month of the second year of the period Meiréki (A.D. 1656), a certain man, for having avenged the death of his cousin's husband at a place called Shimidzudani, in the Kôji-street, disembowelled himself in the temple called Hon-

seiji. On the twenty-sixth day of the sixth month of the eighth year of the period Yempô (A.D. 1680), at the funeral ceremonies in honour of the anniversary of the death of Genyuin Sama, a former Shogun, Naitô Idsumi no Kami, having a cause of hatred against Nagai Shinano no Kami, killed him at one blow with a short sword, in the main hall of the temple called Zôjôji (the burial-place of the Shoguns in Yedo). Idsumi no Kami was arrested by the officers present, and on the following day performed *hara-kiri* at Kiridôshi, in the temple called Seiruji.

In modern times the ceremony has taken place at night, either in the palace or in the garden of a Daimio, to whom the condemned man has been given in charge. Whether it takes place in the palace or in the garden depends upon the rank of the individual. Daimios and Hatamotos, as a matter of course, and the higher retainers of the Shogun, disembowel themselves in the palace: retainers of lower rank should do so in the garden. In the case of vassals of feudatories, according to the rank of their families, those who, being above the grade of captains, carry the bâton,[1] should perform *hara-kiri* in the palace; all others in the garden. If, when the time comes, the persons engaged in the ceremony are in any doubt as to the proper rules to be followed, they should inquire of competent persons, and settle the question. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, during the period Genroku, when Asano

[1] A bâton with a tassel of paper strips, used for giving directions in wartime.

Takumi no Kami[1] disembowelled himself in the palace of a Daimio called Tamura, as the whole thing was sudden and unexpected, the garden was covered with matting, and on the top of this thick mats were laid and a carpet, and the affair was concluded so; but there are people who say that it was wrong to treat a Daimio thus, as if he had been an ordinary Samurai. But it is said that in old times it was the custom that the ceremony should take place upon a leather carpet spread in the garden; and further, that the proper place is inside a picket fence tied together in the garden; so it is wrong for persons who are only acquainted with one form of the ceremony to accuse Tamura of having acted improperly. If, however, the object was to save the house from the pollution of blood, then the accusation of ill-will may well be brought; for the preparation of the place is of great importance.

Formerly it was the custom that, for personages of importance, the enclosure within the picket fence should be of thirty-six feet square. An entrance was made to the south, and another to the north; the door to the south was called *Shuji-ejôon* ("the door of the practice of virtue"); that to the north called *Umbanmon* ("the door of the warm basin"[2]). Two mats, with white binding, were arranged in the shape of a hammer, the one at right angles to the other; six feet of white silk, four feet broad, were

[1] See the story of the Forty-seven Rônins.

[2] No Japanese authority that I have been able to consult gives any explanation of this singular name.

stretched on the mat, which was placed lengthwise; at the four corners were erected four posts for curtains. In front of the two mats was erected a portal, eight feet high by six feet broad, in the shape of the portals in front of temples, made of a fine sort of bamboo wrapped in white[1] silk. White curtains, four feet broad, were hung at the four corners, and four flags, six feet long, on which should be inscribed four quotations from the sacred books. These flags, it is said, were immediately after the ceremony carried away to the grave. At night two lights were placed, one upon either side of the two mats. The candles were placed in saucers upon stands of bamboo, four feet high, wrapped in white silk. The person who was to disembowel himself, entering the picket fence by the north entrance, took his place upon the white silk upon the mat facing the north. Some there were, however, who said that he should sit facing the west; in that case the whole place must be prepared accordingly. The seconds enter the enclosure by the south entrance, at the same time as the principal enters by the north, and take their places on the mat that is placed crosswise.

Nowadays, when the *hara-kiri* is performed inside the palace, a temporary place is made on purpose, either in the garden or in some unoccupied spot; but if the criminal is to die on the day on which he is given in charge, or on the next day, the ceremony, having to take place so quickly, is performed in the

[1] White, in China and Japan, is the colour of mourning.

reception-room. Still, even if there is a lapse of time between the period of giving the prisoner in charge and the execution, it is better that the ceremony should take place in a decent room in the house than in a place made on purpose. If it is heard that, for fear of dirtying his house, a man has made a place expressly, he will be blamed for it. It surely can be no disgrace to the house of a soldier that he was ordered to perform the last offices towards a Samurai who died by *hara-kiri*. To slay his enemy against whom he has cause of hatred, and then to kill himself, is the part of a noble Samurai; and it is sheer nonsense to look upon the place where he has disembowelled himself as polluted. In the beginning of the eighteenth century, seventeen of the retainers of Asano Takumi no Kami performed *hara-kiri* in the garden of a palace at Shirokané, in Yédo. When it was over, the people of the palace called upon the priests of a sect named shugenja to come and purify the place; but when the lord of the palace heard this, he ordered the place to be left as it was; for what was there to purify a place where faithful Samurai had died by their own hand? But in other palaces to which the remainder of the retainers of Takumi no Kami were entrusted, it is said that the places of execution were purified. But the people of that day praised Kumamoto Ko (the Prince of Higo), to whom the palace of Shirokané belonged. It is a currish thing to look upon death in battle or by *hara-kiri* as a pollution; this is a thing to bear in mind. In modern times the place of *hara-kiri* is eighteen feet

square in all cases; in the centre is a place to sit upon and the condemned man is made to sit facing the witnesses; at other times he is placed with his side to the witnesses; this is according to the nature of the spot. In some cases the seconds turn their backs to the witnesses. It is open to question, however, whether this is not a breach of etiquette. The witnesses should be consulted upon these arrangements. If the witnesses have no objection, the condemned man should be placed directly opposite to them.

The place where the witnesses are seated should be removed more than twelve or eighteen feet from the condemned man. The place from which the sentence is read should also be close by. Although the ceremony is gone through in other ways also, still it is more convenient to follow the manner indicated.

If the execution takes place in a room, a kerchief of five breadths of white cotton cloth or a quilt should be laid down, and it is also said that two mats should be prepared; however, as there are already mats in the room, there is no need for special mats; two red rugs should be spread over all, sewed together, one on the top of the other; for if the white cotton cloth be used alone, the blood will soak through on to the mats, therefore it is right the rugs should be spread. On the twenty-third day of the eighth month of the fourth year of the period Yenkiyô (A.D. 1740), at the *hara-kiri* of a certain person there were laid down a white cloth, eight feet square, and on that a quilt of light green cotton,

six feet square, and on that a cloth of white hemp six feet square, and on that two rugs. On the third day of the ninth month of the ninth year of the period Tempô (A.D. 1838), at the *hara-kiri* of a certain person it is said that there were spread a large double cloth of white cotton, and on that two rugs. But of these two occasions, the first must be commended for its careful preparation. If the execution be at night, candlesticks of white wood should be placed at each of the four corners, lest the seconds be hindered in their work. In the place where the witnesses are to sit, ordinary candlesticks should be placed according to etiquette; but an excessive illumination is not decorous. Two screens covered with white paper should be set up, behind the shadow of which are concealed the dirk upon a tray, a bucket to hold the head after it has been cut off, an incense-burner, a pail of water, and a basin. The above rules apply equally to the ceremonies observed when the *hara-kiri* takes place in a garden. In the latter case the place is hung round with a white curtain, which need not be new for the occasion. Two mats, a white cloth, and a rug are spread. If the execution is at night, lanterns of white paper are placed on bamboo poles at the four corners. The sentence having been read inside the house, the persons engaged in the ceremony proceed to the place of execution; but, according to circumstances, the sentence may be read at the place itself. In the case of Asano no Kami, sentence was read out in the house, and he afterwards performed *hara-kiri* in the garden. On the third

day of the fourth month of the fourth year of the period Tenmei (A.D. 1784), a Hatamoto named Sano, having received his sentence in the supreme court-house, disembowelled himself in the garden in front of the prison. When the ceremony takes place in the garden, matting must be spread all the way to the place, so that sandals need not be worn. The reason for this is that some men in that position suffer from a rush of blood to the head, from nervousness, so their sandals might slip off their feet without their being aware of their loss; and as this would have a very bad appearance, it is better to spread matting. Care must be taken lest in spreading the matting, a place be left where two mats join, against which the foot might trip. The white screens and other things are prepared as has been directed above. If any curtailment is made, it must be done as well as circumstances will permit. According to the crime of which a man who is handed over to any Daimio's charge is guilty, it is known whether he will have to perform *hara-kiri;* and the preparations should be made accordingly. Asano Takumi no Kami was taken to the palace of Tamura Sama at the hour of the monkey (between three and five in the afternoon), took off his dress of ceremony, partook of a bowl of soup and five dishes, and drank two cups of warm water, and at the hour of the cock (between five and seven in the evening) disembowelled himself. A case of this kind requires much attention; for great care should be taken that the preparations be carried on without the knowledge of the principal.

If a temporary room has been built expressly for the occasion, to avoid pollution to the house, it should be kept a secret. It once happened that a criminal was received in charge at the palace of a certain nobleman and when his people were about to erect a temporary building for the ceremony, they wrote to consult some of the parties concerned; the letter ran as follows:

"The house in which we live is very small and inconvenient in all respects. We have ordered the guard to treat our prisoner with all respect; but our retainers who are placed on guard are much inconvenienced for want of space; besides, in the event of fire breaking out or any extraordinary event taking place, the place is so small that it would be difficult to get out. We are thinking, therefore, of adding an apartment to the original building, so that the guard may be able at all times to go in and out freely, and that if, in case of fire or otherwise, we should have to leave the house, we may do so easily. We beg to consult you upon this point."

When a Samurai has to perform *hara-kiri* by the command of his own feudal lord, the ceremony should take place in one of the lesser palaces of the clan. Once upon a time, a certain prince of the Inouyé clan, having a just cause of offence against his steward, who was called Ishikawa Tôzayémon, and wishing to punish him, caused him to be killed in his principal palace at Kandabashi, in Yedo. When this matter was reported to the Shogun, having been convicted of disrespect of the privileges of the city, he

was ordered to remove to his lesser palace at Asakusa. Now, although the *hara-kiri* cannot be called properly an execution in that by it the honour of the Samurai is not affected, it is only a question of degree; it is a matter of ceremonial. If the principal palace[1] is a long distance from the Shogun's castle, then the *hara-kiri* may take place there; but there can be no objection whatever to its taking place in a minor palace. Nowadays, when a man is condemned to *hara-kiri* by a Daimio, the ceremony usually takes place in one of the lesser palaces; the place commonly selected is an open space near the horse-exercising ground, and the preparations which I have described above are often shortened according to circumstances.

When a retainer is suddenly ordered to perform *hara-kiri* during a journey, a temple or shrine should be hired for the occasion. On these hurried occasions, coarse mats, faced with finer matting or common mats, may be used. If the criminal is of rank to have an armour-bearer, a carpet of skin should be spread, should one be easily procurable. The straps of the skin (which are at the head) should, according to old custom, be to the front, so that the fur may point backwards. In old days, when the ceremony took place in a garden, a carpet of skin was spread. To hire a temple for the purpose of causing a man to

[1] The principal yashikis—palaces—of the nobles are of the most part immediately round the Shogun's castle, in the enclosure known as the official quarter. Their proximity to the palace forbids their being made the scenes of executions.

perform *hara-kiri* was of frequent occurrence; it is doubtful whether it may be done at the present time. This sort of question should be referred beforehand to some competent person, that the course to be adopted may be clearly understood.

In the period Kambun (A.D. 1661–1673) a Prince Sakai, travelling through the Bishiu territory, hired a temple or shrine for one of his retainers to disembowel himself in; and so the affair was concluded.

When a man has been ordered by the Government to disembowel himself, the public censors, who have been appointed to act as witnesses, write to the prince who has the criminal in charge, to inform them that they will go to his palace on public business. This message is written directly to the chief, and is sent by an assistant censor; and a suitable answer is returned to it. Before the ceremony, the witnesses send an assistant censor to see the place, and look at a plan of the house, and to take a list of the names of the persons who are to be present; he also has an interview with the *kaishaku*, or seconds, and examines them upon the way of performing the ceremonies. When all the preparations have been made, he goes to fetch the censors; and they all proceed together to the place of execution, dressed in their hempen-cloth dress of ceremony. The retainers of the palace are collected to do obeisance in the entrance-yard; and the lord, to whom the criminal has been entrusted, goes as far as the front porch to meet the censors, and conducts them to the front reception-room. The chief censor then announces to the lord of the palace

that he had come to read out the sentence of such an one who has been condemned to perform *hara-kiri*, and that the second censor has come to witness the execution of the sentence. The lord of the palace then inquires whether he is expected to attend the execution in person, and, if any of the relations or family of the criminal should beg to receive his remains, whether their request should be complied with; after this he announces that he will order everything to be made ready, and leaves the room. Tea, a fire-box for smoking, and sweetmeats are set before censors; but they decline to accept any hospitality until their business shall have been concluded. The minor officials follow the same rule. If the censors express a wish to see the place of execution, the retainers of the palace show the way, and their lord accompanies them; in this, however, he may be replaced by one of his karô or councillors. They then return, and take their seats in the reception-room. After this, when all the preparations have been made, the master of the house leads the censors to the place where the sentence is to be read; and it is etiquette that they should wear both sword and dirk.[1] The lord of the palace takes his place on one side; the inferior censors sit on either side in a lower place. The councillors and other officers of the palace also take their places. One of the councillors present, addressing the censors without moving from his place, asks whether he shall bring forth the prisoner.

[1] A Japanese removes his sword on entering a house, retaining only his dirk.

Previously to this, the retainers of the palace, going to the room where the prisoner is confined, inform him that, as the censors have arrived, he should change his dress, and the attendants bring out a change of clothes upon a large tray: it is when he has finished his toilet that the witnesses go forth and take their places in the appointed order, and the principal is then introduced. He is preceded by one man, who should be of the rank of *Mono-gashira* (retainer of the fourth rank), who wears a dirk, but no sword. Six men act as attendants; they should be of the fifth or sixth rank; they walk on either side of the principal. They are followed by one man who should be of the rank of *Yônin* (councillor of the second class). When they reach the place, the leading man draws on one side and sits down, and the six attendants sit down on either side of the principal. The officer who follows him sits down behind him, and the chief censor reads the sentence.

When the reading of the sentence is finished, the principal leaves the room and again changes his clothes, and the chief censor immediately leaves the palace; but the lord of the palace does not conduct him to the door. The second censor returns to the reception-room until the principal has changed his clothes. When the principal has taken his seat at the place of execution, the councillors of the palace announce to the second censor that all is ready; he then proceeds to the place, wearing his sword and dirk. The lord of the palace, also wearing his sword and dirk, takes his seat on one side. The inferior

censors and councillors sit in front of the censor: they wear the dirk only. The assistant second brings a dirk upon a tray, and, having placed it in front of the principal, withdraws on one side: when the principal leans his head forward, his chief second strikes off his head, which is immediately shown to the censor, who identifies it, and tells the master of the palace that he is satisfied, and thanks him for all his trouble. The corpse, as it lies, is hidden by a white screen which is set up around it, and incense is brought out. The witnesses leave the place. The lord of the palace accompanies them as far as the porch, and the retainers prostrate themselves in the yard as before. The retainers who should be present at the place of execution are one or two councillors (Karô), two or three second councillors (*Yônin*), two or three *Monogashira*, one chief of the palace (*Rusui*), six attendants, one chief second, two assistant seconds, one man to carry incense, who need not be a person of rank—any Samurai will do. They attend to the setting up of the white screen.

The duty of burying the corpse and of setting the place in order again devolves upon four men; these are selected from Samurai of the middle or lower class; during the performances of their duties, they hitch up their trousers and wear neither sword nor dirk. Their names are previously sent in to the censor, who acts as witness; and to the junior censors, should they desire it. Before the arrival of the chief censor, the requisite utensils for extinguishing a fire

are prepared, firemen are engaged,[1] and officers constantly go the rounds to watch against fire. From the time when the chief censor comes into the house until he leaves it, no one is allowed to enter the premises. The servants on guard at the entrance porch should wear their hempen dresses of ceremony. Everything in the palace should be conducted with decorum, and the strictest attention paid in all things.

When any one is condemned to *hara-kiri*, it would be well that people should go to the palace of the Prince of Higo and learn what transpired at the execution of the Rônins of Asano Takumi no Kami.

A curtain was hung round the garden in front of the reception-room; three mats were laid down, and upon these was placed a white cloth. The condemned men were kept in the reception-room and summoned, one by one; two men, one on each side, accompanied them; the second followed behind; and they proceeded together to the place of execution. When the execution was concluded in each case, the corpse was hidden from the sight of the chief witness by a white screen, folded up in white cloth, placed on a mat, and carried off to the rear by two foot-soldiers; it was then placed in a coffin. The blood-stained ground was sprinkled with sand, and swept clean; fresh mats were laid down, and the

[1] In Japan, where fires are of daily occurrence, the fire-buckets and other utensils form part of the gala dress of the house of a person of rank.

place prepared anew; after which the next man was summoned to come forth.

When a clansman is ordered by his feudal lord to perform *hara-kiri*, the sentence must be read out by the censor of the clan, who also acts as witness. He should take his place in front of the criminal, at a distance of twelve feet; according to some books, the distance should be eighteen feet, and he should sit obliquely, not facing the criminal; he should lay his sword down by his side, but, if he pleases, he may wear it in his girdle; he must read out the sentence distinctly. If the sentence be a long document, to begin reading in a very loud voice and afterwards drop into a whisper has an appearance of faint-heartedness; but to read it throughout in a low voice is worse still; it should be delivered clearly from beginning to end. It is the duty of the chief witness to set an example of fortitude to the other persons who are to take part in the execution. When the second has finished his work, he carries the head to the chief witness, who, after inspecting it, must declare that he has identified it; he then should take his sword and leave his place. It is sufficient, however, that the head should be struck off without being carried to the chief witness; in that case, the second receives his instructions beforehand. On rising, the chief witness should step out with his left foot and turn to the left. If the ceremony takes place out of doors, the chief witness, wearing his sword and dirk, should sit upon a box; he must wear his hempen dress of ceremony; he may hitch his trousers up slightly; ac-

cording to his rank, he may wear his full dress—that is, wings over his full dress. It is the part of the chief witness to instruct the seconds and others in the duties which they have to perform, and also to preconcert measures in the event of any mishap occurring.

If whilst the various persons to be engaged in the ceremony are rubbing up their military lore, and preparing themselves for the event, any other person should come in, they should immediately turn the conversation. Persons of the rank of Samurai should be familiar with all the details of the *hara-kiri;* and to be seen discussing what should be done in case anything went wrong, and so forth, would have an appearance of ignorance. If, however, an intimate friend should go to the place, rather than have any painful concealment, he may be consulted upon the whole affair.

When the sentence has been read, it is probable that the condemned man will have some last words to say to the chief witness. It must depend on the nature of what he has to say whether it will be received or not. If he speaks in a confused or bewildered manner, no attention is paid to it; his second should lead him away, of his own accord or at a sign from the chief witness.

If the condemned man be a person who has been given in charge to a prince by the Government, the prince after the reading of the sentence, should send his retainers to the prisoner with a message to say that the decrees of the Government are not to be

eluded, but that if he has any last wishes to express, they are ordered by their lord to receive them. If the prisoner is a man of high rank, the lord of the palace should go in person to hear his last wishes.

The condemned man should answer in the following way:

"Sir, I thank you for your careful consideration, but I have nothing that I wish to say. I am greatly indebted to you for the great kindness which I have received since I have been under your charge. I beg you to take my respects to your lord and to the gentlemen of your clan who have treated me so well." Or he may say, "Sirs, I have nothing to say; yet, since you are so kind as to think of me, I should be obliged if you would deliver such and such a message to such an one." This is the proper and becoming sort of speech for the occasion. If the prisoner entrusts them with any message, the retainers should receive it in such a manner as to set his mind at rest. Should he ask for writing materials in order to write a letter, as this is forbidden by the law, they should tell him so, and not grant his request. Still they must feel that it is painful to refuse the request of a dying man, and must do their best to assist him. They must exhaust every available kindness and civility, as was done in the period Genroku, in the case of the Rônins of Asano Takumi no Kami. The Prince of Higo, after the sentence had been read, caused paper and writing-materials, to be taken to their room. If the prisoner is light-headed from excitement, it is no use furnishing him with writing-

materials. It must depend upon circumstances; but when a man has murdered another, having made up his mind to abide by the consequences, then that man's execution should be carried through with all honour. When a man kills another on the spot, in a fit of ungovernable passion, and then is bewildered and dazed by his own act, the same pains need not be taken to conduct matters punctiliously. If the prisoner be a careful man, he will take an early opportunity after he has been given in charge to express his wishes. To carry kindness so far as to supply writing-materials and the like is not obligatory. If any doubt exists upon the point, the chief witness may be consulted.

After the Rônins of Asano Takumi no Kami had heard their sentence in the palace of Matsudaira Oki no Kami, that Daimio in person went and took leave of them, and calling Oishi Chikara,[1] the son of their chief, to him, said, "I have heard that your mother is at home in your own country; how she will grieve when she hears of your death and that of your father, I can well imagine. If you have any message that you wish to leave for her, tell me, without standing upon ceremony, and I will transmit it without delay." For a while Chikara kept his head bent down towards the ground; at last he drew back a little, and, lifting his head, said, "I humbly thank your lordship for what you have been pleased to say. My father warned me from the first that our crime

[1] Oishi Chikara was separated from his father, who was one of the seventeen delivered over to the charge of the Prince of Higo.

was so great that, even were we to be pardoned by a gracious judgment upon one count, I must not forget that there would be a hundred million counts against us for which we must commit suicide; and that if I disregarded his words his hatred would pursue me after death. My father impressed this upon me at the temple called Sengakuji, and again when I was separated from him to be taken to the palace of Prince Sengoku. Now my father and myself have been condemned to perform *hara-kiri*, according to the wish of our hearts. Still I cannot forget to think of my mother. When we parted at Kiyôto, she told me that our separation would be for long, and she bade me not to play the coward when I thought of her. As I took a long leave of her then, I have no message to send to her now." When he spoke thus, Oki no Kami and all his retainers, who were drawn up around him, were moved to tears in admiration of his heroism.

Although it is right that the condemned man should bathe and partake of wine and food, these details should be curtailed. Even should he desire these favours, it must depend upon his conduct whether they be granted or refused. He should be caused to die as quickly as possible. Should he wish for some water to drink, it should be given to him. If in his talk he should express himself like a noble Samurai, all pains should be exhausted in carrying out his execution. Yet however careful a man may be, as he nears his death his usual demeanour will undergo a change. If the execution is delayed,

in all probability it will cause the prisoner's courage to fail him; therefore, as soon as the sentence shall have been passed, the execution should be brought to a conclusion. This, again, is a point for the chief witness to remember.

When the condemned man is one who has been given in charge for execution, six attendants are employed; when the execution is within the clan, then two or three attendants will suffice; the number, however, must depend upon the rank of the principal. Men of great nerve and strength must be selected for the office; they must wear their hempen dress of ceremony and tuck up their trousers; they must on no account wear either sword or dirk, but have a small poniard hidden in their bosom: these are the officers who attend upon the condemned man when he changes his dress, and who sit by him on the right hand and on the left hand to guard him whilst the sentence is being read. In the event of any mistake occurring (such as the prisoner attempting to escape), they knock him down; and should he be unable to stand or to walk, they help to support him. The attendants accompanying the principal to the palace of execution, if they are six in number, four of them take their seats some way off and mount guard, while the other two should sit close behind the principal. They must understand that should there be any mistake they must throw the condemned man, and, holding him down, cut off his head with their poniard, or stab him to death. If the second bungles in cutting off the head and the principal attempts to

rise, it is the duty of the attendants to kill him. They must help him to take off his upper garments and bare his body. In recent times, however, there have been cases where the upper garments have not been removed: this depends upon circumstances. The setting up of the white screen, and the laying the corpse in the coffin, are duties which, although they may be performed by other officers, originally devolved upon the six attendants. When a common man is executed, he is bound with cords, and so made to take his place; but a Samurai wears his dress of ceremony, is presented with a dagger, and dies thus. There ought to be no anxiety lest such a man should attempt to escape; still, as there is no knowing what these six attendants may be called upon to do, men should be selected who thoroughly understand their business.

The seconds are three in number—the chief second, the assistant second, and the inferior second. When the execution is carried out with proper solemnity, three men are employed; still a second and assistant second are sufficient. If three men serve as seconds, their several duties are as follows:—The chief second strikes off the head; that is his duty: he is the most important officer in the execution by *hara-kiri*. The assistant second brings forward the tray, on which is placed the dirk; that is his duty: he must perform his part in such a manner that the principal second is not hindered in his work. The assistant second is the officer of second importance in the execution. The third or inferior second carries the head to the chief

witness for identification; and in the event of something suddenly occurring to hinder either of the other two seconds, he should bear in mind that he must be ready to act as his substitute: his is an office of great importance, and a proper person must be selected to fill it.

Although there can be no such thing as a *kaishaku* (second) in any case except in one of *hara-kiri*, still in old times, guardians and persons who assisted others were also called *kaishaku:* the reason for this is because the *kaishaku*, or second, comes to the assistance of the principal. If the principal were to make any mistake at the fatal moment, it would be a disgrace to his dead body: it is in order to prevent such mistakes that the *kaishaku*, or second, is employed. It is the duty of the *kaishaku* to consider this as his first duty.

When a man is appointed to act as second to another, what shall be said of him if he accepts the office with a smiling face? Yet must he not put on a face of distress. It is as well to attempt to excuse oneself from performing the duty. There is no heroism in cutting a man's head off well, and it is a disgrace to do it in a bungling manner; yet must not a man allege lack of skill as a pretext for evading the office, for it is an unworthy thing that a Samurai should want the skill required to behead a man. If there are any that advocate employing young men as seconds, it should rather be said that their hands are inexpert. To play the coward and yield up the office to another man is out of the question. When a man

is called upon to perform the office, he should express his readiness to use his sword (the dirk may be employed, but the sword is the proper weapon). As regards the sword, the second should borrow that of the principal: if there is any objection to this, he should receive a sword from his lord; he should not use his own sword. When the assistant seconds have been appointed, the three should take counsel together about the details of the place of execution, when they have been carefully instructed by their superiors in all the ceremonies; and having made careful inquiry, should there be anything wrong, they should appeal to their superiors for instruction. The seconds wear their dresses of ceremony when the criminal is a man given in charge by the Government: when he is one of their own clan, they need only wear the trousers of the Samurai. In old days it is said that they were dressed in the same way as the principal; and some authorities assert that at the *hara-kiri* of a nobleman of high rank the seconds should wear white clothes, and that the handle of the sword should be wrapped in white silk. If the execution takes place in the house, they should partially tuck up their trousers; if in the garden, they should tuck them up entirely.

The seconds should address the principal, and say, "Sir, we have been appointed to act as your seconds; we pray you to set your mind at rest," and so forth; but this must depend upon the rank of the criminal. At this time, too, if the principal has any last wish to express, the second should receive it, and should

treat him with every consideration in order to relieve his anxiety. If the second has been selected by the principal on account of old friendship between them, or if the latter, during the time that he has been in charge, has begged some special retainer of the palace to act as his second in the event of his being condemned to death, the person so selected should thank the principal for choosing so unworthy a person, and promise to beg his lord to allow him to act as second: so he should answer, and comfort him, and having reported the matter to his lord, should act as second. He should take that opportunity to borrow his principal's sword in some such terms as the following: "As I am to have the honour of being your second, I would fain borrow your sword for the occasion. It may be a consolation to you to perish by your own sword, with which you are familiar." If, however, the principal declines, and prefers to be executed with the second's sword, his wish must be complied with. If the second should make an awkward cut with his own sword, it is a disgrace to him; therefore he should borrow some one else's sword, so that the blame may rest with the sword, and not with the swordsman. Although this is the rule, and although every Samurai should wear a sword fit to cut off a man's head, still if the principal has begged to be executed with the second's own sword, it must be done as he desires.

It is probable that the condemned man will inquire of his second about the arrangements which have been made: he must attend therefore to render-

ing himself capable of answering all such questions. Once upon a time, when the condemned man inquired of his second whether his head would be cut off at the moment when he received the tray with the dirk upon it, "No," replied the second; "at the moment when you stab yourself with the dirk your head will be cut off." At the execution of one Sanô, he told his second that, when he had stabbed himself in the belly, he would utter a cry; and begged him to be cool when he cut off his head. The second replied that he would do as he wished, but begged him in the meantime to take the tray with the dirk, according to proper form. When Sanô reached out his hand to take the tray, the second cut off his head immediately. Now, although this was not exactly right, still as the second acted so in order to save a Samurai from the disgrace of performing the *harakiri* improperly (by crying out), it can never be wrong for a second to act kindly. If the principal urgently requests to be allowed to really disembowel himself, his wish may, according to circumstances, be granted; but in this case care must be taken that no time be lost in striking off the head. The custom of striking off the head, the prisoner only going through the semblance of disembowelling himself, dates from the period Yempô (about 190 years ago).

When the principal has taken his place, the second strips his right shoulder of the dress of ceremony, which he allows to fall behind his sleeve, and, drawing his sword, lays down the scabbard, taking care that his weapon is not seen by the principal; then he

takes his place on the left of the principal and close behind him. The principal should sit facing the west, and the second facing the north, and in that position should he strike the blow. When the second perceives the assistant second bring out the tray on which is laid the dirk, he must brace up his nerves and settle his heart beneath his navel: when the tray is laid down, he must put himself in position to strike the blow. He should step out first with the left foot, and then change so as to bring his right foot forward: this is the position which he should assume to strike; he may, however, reverse the position of his feet. When the principal removes his upper garments, the second must poise his sword: when the principal reaches out his hand to draw the tray towards him, as he leans his head forward a little, is the exact moment for the second to strike. There are all sorts of traditions about this. Some say that the principal should take the tray and raise it respectfully to his head, and set it down; and that this is the moment to strike. There are three rules for the time of cutting off the head: the first is when the dirk is laid on the tray; the second is when the principal looks at the left side of his belly before inserting the dirk; the third is when he inserts the dirk. If these three moments are allowed to pass, it becomes a difficult matter to cut off the head: so says tradition. However, four moments for cutting are also recorded: first, when the assistant second retires after having laid down the stand on which is the dirk; second, when the principal draws the stand towards him;

third, when he takes the dirk in his hand; fourth, when he makes the incision into the belly. Although all four ways are approved, still the first is too soon; the last three are right and proper. In short, the blow should be struck without delay. If he has struck off the head at a blow without failure, the second, taking care not to raise his sword, but holding it point downwards, should retire backward a little and wipe his weapon kneeling; he should have plenty of white paper ready in his girdle or in his bosom to wipe away the blood and rub up his sword; having replaced his sword in its scabbard, he should readjust his upper garments and take his seat to the rear. When the head has fallen, the junior second should enter, and, taking up the head, present it to the witness for inspection. When he has identified it, the ceremony is concluded. If there is no assistant or junior second, the second, as soon as he has cut off the head, carrying his sword reversed in his left hand, should take the head in his right hand, holding it by the topknot of hair, should advance towards the witness, passing on the right side of the corpse, and show the right profile of the head to the witness, resting the chin of the head upon the hilt of his sword, and kneeling on his left knee; then returning again round by the left of the corpse, kneeling on his left knee, and carrying the head in his left hand and resting it on the edge of his sword, he should again show the left profile to the witness. It is also laid down as another rule, that the second, laying down his sword, should take out paper from the bosom of

his dress, and placing the head in the palm of his left hand, and taking the top-knot of hair in his right hand, should lay the head upon the paper, and so submit it for inspection. Either way may be said to be right.

To lay down thick paper, and place the head on it, shows a disposition to pay respect to the head; to place it on the edge of the sword is insulting: the course pursued must depend upon the rank of person. If the ceremony is to be curtailed, it may end with the cutting off of the head: that must be settled beforehand, in consultation with the witness. In the event of the second making a false cut, so as not to strike off the head at a blow, the second must take the head by the top-knot, and, pressing it down, cut it off. Should he take bad aim and cut the shoulder by mistake, and should the principal rise and cry out, before he has time to writhe, he should hold him down and stab him to death, and then cut off his head, or the assistant seconds, who are sitting behind, should come forward and hold him down, while the chief second cuts off his head. It may be necessary for the second, after he has cut off the head, to push down the body, and then take up the head for inspection. If the body does not fall at once, which is said to be sometimes the case, the second should pull the feet to make it fall.

There are some who say that the perfect way for the second to cut off the head is not to cut right through the neck at a blow, but to leave a little uncut, and, as the head hangs by the skin, to seize

the top-knot and slice it off, and then submit it for inspection. The reason of this is, lest, the head being struck off at a blow, the ceremony should be confounded with an ordinary execution. According to the old authorities, this is the proper and respectful manner. After the head is cut off, the eyes are apt to blink, and the mouth to move, and to bite the pebbles and sand. This being hateful to see, at what amongst Samurai is so important an occasion, and being a shameful thing, it is held to be best not to let the head fall, but to hold back a little in delivering the blow. Perhaps this may be right; yet it is a very difficult matter to cut so as to leave the head hanging by a little flesh, and there is the danger of missing the cut; and as any mistake in the cut is most horrible to see, it is better to strike a fair blow at once. Others say that, even when the head is struck off at a blow, the semblance of slicing it off should be gone through afterwards; yet be it borne in mind that this is unnecessary.

Three methods of carrying the sword are recognized amongst those skilled in swordsmanship. If the rank of the principal be high, the sword is raised aloft; if the principal and second are of equal rank, the sword is carried at the centre of the body; if the principal be of inferior rank, the sword is allowed to hang downwards. The proper position for the second to strike from is kneeling on one knee, but there is no harm in his standing up: others say that, if the execution takes place inside the house, the

second should kneel; if in the garden, he should stand. These are not points upon which to insist obstinately: a man should strike in whatever position is most convenient to him.

The chief duty for the assistant second to bear in mind is the bringing in of the tray with the dirk, which should be produced very quietly when the principal takes his place: it should be placed so that the condemned man may have to stretch his hand well out in order to reach it.[1] The assistant second then returns to his own place; but if the condemned man shows any signs of agitation, the assistant second must lend his assistance, so that the head may be properly cut off. It once happened that the condemned man, having received the tray from the assistant second, held it up for a long time without putting it down, until those near him had over and over again urged him to set it down. It also happens that after the tray has been set down, and the assistant second has retired, the condemned man does not put out his hand to take it; then must the assistant second press him to take it. Also the principal may ask that the tray be placed a little nearer to him, in which case his wish must be granted. The tray may also be placed in such a way that the assistant second, holding it in his left hand, may reach the dirk to the condemned man, who leans forward to take it. Which is the best of all these ways is uncertain. The object to aim at is, that the condemned man should lean forward to receive the

[1] It should be placed about three feet away from him.

blow. Whether the assistant second retires, or not, must depend upon the attitude assumed by the condemned man.

If the prisoner be an unruly, violent man, a fan, instead of a dirk, should be placed upon the tray; and should he object to this, he should be told, in answer, that the substitution of the fan is an ancient custom. This may occur sometimes. It is said that once upon a time, in one of the palaces of the Daimios, a certain brave matron murdered a man, and having been allowed to die with all the honours of the *hara-kiri*, a fan was placed upon the tray, and her head was cut off. This may be considered right and proper. If the condemned man appears inclined to be turbulent, the seconds, without showing any sign of alarm, should hurry to his side, and, urging him to get ready, quickly cause him to make all his preparations with speed, and to sit down in his place; the chief second, then drawing his sword, should get ready to strike, and, ordering him to proceed as fast as possible with the ceremony of receiving the tray, should perform his duty without appearing to be afraid.

A certain Prince Katô, having condemned one of his councillors to death, assisted at the ceremony behind a curtain of slips of bamboo. The councillor, whose name was Katayama, was bound, and during that time glared fiercely at the curtain, and showed no signs of fear. The chief second was a man named Jihei, who had always been used to treat Katayama with great respect. So Jihei, sword in hand, said to

Katayama, "Sir, your last moment has arrived: be so good as to turn your cheek so that your head may be straight." When Katayama heard this, he replied, "Fellow, you are insolent"; and as he was looking round, Jihei struck the fatal blow. The lord Katô afterwards inquired of Jihei what was the reason of this; and he replied that, as he saw that the prisoner was meditating treason, he determined to kill him at once, and put a stop to this rebellious spirit. This is a pattern for other seconds to bear in mind.

When the head has been struck off, it becomes the duty of the junior second to take it up by the top-knot, and, placing it upon some thick paper laid over the palm of his hand, to carry it for inspection by the witness. This ceremony has been explained above. If the head be bald, he should pierce the left ear with the stiletto carried in the scabbard of his dirk, and so carry it to be identified. He must carry thick paper in the bosom of his dress. Inside the paper he shall place a bag with rice bran and ashes, in order that he may carry the head without being sullied by the blood. When the identification of the head is concluded, the junior second's duty is to place it in a bucket.

If anything should occur to hinder the chief second, the assistant second must take his place. It happened on one occasion that before the execution took place the chief second lost his nerve, yet he cut off the head without any difficulty; but when it came to taking up the head for inspection, his nervousness

so far got the better of him as to be extremely inconvenient. This is a thing against which persons acting as seconds have to guard.

As a corollary to the above elaborate statement of the ceremonies proper to be observed at the *hara-kiri*, I may here describe an instance of such an execution which I was sent officially to witness. The condemned man was Taki Zenzaburô, an officer of the Prince of Bizen, who gave the order to fire upon the foreign settlement at Hiogo in the month of February, 1868,—an attack to which I have alluded in the preamble to the story of the Êta Maiden and the Hatamoto. Up to that time no foreigner had witnessed such an execution, which was rather looked upon as a traveller's fable.

The ceremony, which was ordered by the Mikado himself, took place at 10:30 at night in the temple of Seifukuji, the head-quarters of the Satsuma troops at Hiogo. A witness was sent from each of the foreign legations. We were seven foreigners in all.

We were conducted to the temple by officers of the Princes of Satsuma and Choshiu. Although the ceremony was to be conducted in the most private manner, the casual remarks which we overheard in the streets, and a crowd lining the principal entrance to the temple, showed that it was a matter of no little interest to the public. The courtyard of the temple presented a most picturesque sight; it was crowded with soldiers standing about in knots round large fires, which threw a dim flickering light over the heavy eaves and quaint gable-ends of the sacred

buildings. We were shown into an inner room, where we were to wait until the preparation for the ceremony was completed: in the next room to us were the high Japanese officers. After a long interval, which seemed doubly long from the silence which prevailed, Itô Shunské, the provisional Governor of Hiogo, came and took down our names, and informed us that seven *kenshi*, sheriffs or witnesses, would attend on the part of the Japanese. He and another officer represented the Mikado; two captains of Satsuma's infantry, and two of Choshiu's, with a representative of the Prince of Bizen, the clan of the condemned man, completed the number, which was probably arranged in order to tally with that of the foreigners. Itô Shunské further inquired whether we wished to put any questions to the prisoner. We replied in the negative.

A further delay then ensued, after which we were invited to follow the Japanese witnesses into the *hondo* or main hall of the temple, where the ceremony was to be performed. It was an imposing scene. A large hall with a high roof supported by dark pillars of wood. From the ceiling hung a profusion of those huge gilt lamps and ornaments peculiar to Buddhist temples. in front of the high altar, where the floor, covered with beautiful white mats, is raised some three or four inches from the ground, was laid a rug of scarlet felt. Tall candles placed at regular intervals gave out a dim mysterious light, just sufficient to let all the proceedings be seen. The seven Japanese took their places on the left of the

raised floor, the seven foreigners on the right. No other person was present.

After an interval of a few minutes of anxious suspense, Taki Zenzaburô, a stalwart man, thirty-two years of age, with a noble air, walked into the hall attired in his dress of ceremony, with the peculiar hempen-cloth wings which are worn on great occasions. He was accompanied by a *kaishaku* and three officers, who wore the *jimbaori* or war surcoat with gold-tissue facings. The word *kaishaku*, it should be observed, is one to which our word executioner is no equivalent term. The office is that of a gentleman: in many cases it is performed by a kinsman or friend of the condemned, and the relation between them is rather that of principal and second than that of victim and executioner. In this instance the *kaishaku* was a pupil of Taki Zenzaburô, and was selected by the friends of the latter from among their own number for his skill in swordsmanship.

With the *kaishaku* on his left hand, Taki Zenzaburô advanced slowly towards the Japanese witnesses, and the two bowed before them, then drawing near to the foreigners they saluted us in the same way, perhaps even with more deference: in each case the salutation was ceremoniously returned. Slowly, and with great dignity, the condemned man mounted on to the raised floor, prostrated himself before the high altar twice, and seated[1] himself on

[1]Seated himself—that is, in the Japanese fashion, his knees and toes touching the ground, and his body resting on his heels. In this position, which is one of respect, he remained until his death.

the felt carpet with his back to the high altar, the *kaishaku* crouching on his left-hand side. One of the three attendant officers then came forward, bearing a stand of the kind used in temples for offerings, on which, wrapped in paper, lay the *wakizashi*, the short sword or dirk of the Japanese, nine inches and a half in length, with a point and edge as sharp as a razor's. This he handed, prostrating himself, to the condemned man, who received it reverently, raising it to his head with both hands, and placed it in front of himself.

After another profound obeisance, Taki Zenzaburô, in a voice which betrayed just so much emotion and hesitation as might be expected from a man who is making a painful confession, but with no sign of either in his face or manner, spoke as follows:

"I, and I alone, unwarrantably gave the order to fire on the foreigners at Kôbe, and again as they tried to escape. For this crime I disembowel myself, and I beg you who are present to do me the honour of witnessing the act."

Bowing once more, the speaker allowed his upper garments to slip down to his girdle, and remained naked to the waist. Carefully, according to custom, he tucked his sleeves under his knees to prevent himself from falling backwards; for a noble Japanese gentleman should die falling forwards. Deliberately, with a steady hand, he took the dirk that lay before him; he looked at it wistfully, almost affectionately; for a moment he seemed to collect his thoughts for the last time, and then stabbing himself deeply below

the waist on the left-hand side, he drew the dirk slowly across to the right side, and, turning it in the wound, gave a slight cut upwards. During this sickeningly painful operation he never moved a muscle of his face. When he drew out the dirk, he leaned forward and stretched out his neck; an expression of pain for the first time crossed his face, but he uttered no sound. At that moment the *kaishaku*, who, still crouching by his side, had been keenly watching his every movement, sprang to his feet, poised his sword for a second in the air; there was a flash, a heavy, ugly thud, a crashing fall; with one blow the head had been severed from the body.

A dead silence followed, broken only by the hideous noise of the blood throbbing out of the inert heap before us, which but a moment before had been a brave and chivalrous man. It was horrible.

The *kaishaku* made a low bow, wiped his sword with a piece of paper which he had ready for the purpose, and retired from the raised floor; and the stained dirk was solemnly borne away, a bloody proof of the execution.

The ceremony, to which the place and the hour gave an additional solemnity, was characterized throughout by that extreme dignity and punctiliousness which are the distinctive marks of the proceedings of Japanese gentlemen of rank; and it is important to note this fact, because it carries with it the conviction that the dead man was indeed the officer who had committed the crime, and no substitute. While profoundly impressed by the terrible

scene it was impossible at the same time not to be filled with admiration of the firm and manly bearing of the sufferer, and of the nerve with which the *kaishaku* performed his last duty to his master. Nothing could more strongly show the force of education. The Samurai, or gentleman of the military class, from his earliest years learns to look upon the *hara-kiri* as a ceremony in which some day he may be called upon to play a part as principal or second. In old-fashioned families, which hold to the traditions of ancient chivalry, the child is instructed in the rite and familiarized with the idea as an honourable expiation of crime or blotting out of disgrace. If the hour comes, he is prepared for it, and bravely faces an ordeal which early training has robbed of half its horrors. In what other country in the world does a man learn that the last tribute of affection which he may have to pay to his best friend may be to act as his executioner?

Since I wrote the above, we have heard that, before his entry into the fatal hall, Taki Zenzaburô called round him all those of his own clan who were present, many of whom had carried out his order to fire, and, addressing them in a short speech, acknowledged the heinousness of his crime and the justice of his sentence and warned them solemnly to avoid any repetition of attacks upon foreigners. They were also addressed by the officers of the Mikado, who urged them to bear no ill will against us on account of the fate of their fellow-clansman. They declared that they entertained no such feeling.

The opinion has been expressed that it would have been politic for the foreign representatives at the last moment to have interceded for the life of Taki Zenzaburô. The question is believed to have been debated among the representatives themselves. My own belief is that mercy, although it might have produced the desired effect among the more civilized clans, would have been mistaken for weakness and fear by those wilder people who have not yet a personal knowledge of foreigners. The offence—an attack upon the flags and subjects of all the Treaty Powers, which lack of skill, not of will, alone prevented from ending in a universal massacre—was the gravest that has been committed upon foreigners since their residence in Japan. Death was undoubtedly deserved, and the form chosen was in Japanese eyes merciful and yet judicial. The crime might have involved a war and cost hundreds of lives; it was wiped out by one death. I believe that, in the interest of Japan as well as in our own, the course pursued was wise, and it was very satisfactory to me to find that one of the ablest Japanese ministers, with whom I had a discussion upon the subject, was quite of my opinion.

The ceremonies observed at the *hara-kiri* appear to vary slightly in detail in different parts of Japan; but the following memorandum upon the subject of the rite, as it used to be practiced at Yedo during the rule of the Tycoon, clearly established its judicial character. I translated it from a paper drawn up for me by a Japanese who was able to speak of what

he had seen himself. Three different ceremonies are described:

1st. *Ceremonies observed at the "hara-kiri" of a Hatamoto (petty noble of the Tycoon's court) in prison.* —This is conducted with great secrecy. Six mats are spread in a large courtyard of the prison; an *ometsuké* (officer whose duties appear to consist in the surveillance of other officers), assisted by two other *ometsukés* of the second and third class, acts as *kenshi* (sheriff or witness), and sits in front of the mats. The condemned man, attired in his dress of ceremony, and wearing his wings of hempen cloth, sits in the centre of the mats. At each of the four corners of the mats sits a prison official. Two officers of the Governor of the city act as *kaishaku* (executioners or seconds), and take their place, one on the right hand and the other on the left hand of the condemned. The *kaishaku* on the left side, announcing his name and surname, says, bowing, "I have the honour to act as *kaishaku* to you; have you any last wishes to confide to me?" The condemned man thanks him and accepts the offer or not, as the case may be. He then bows to the sheriff, and a wooden dirk nine and a half inches long is placed before him at a distance of three feet, wrapped in paper, and lying on a stand such as is used for offerings in temples. As he reaches forward to take the wooden sword, and stretches out his neck, the *kaishaku* on his left-hand side draws his sword and strikes off his head. The *kaishaku* on the right-hand side takes up the head and shows it to the sheriff. The

body is given to the relations of the deceased for burial. His property is confiscated.

2nd. *The ceremonies observed at the "hara-kiri" of a Daimio's retainer.*—When the retainer of a Daimio is condemned to perform the *hara-kiri*, four mats are placed in the yard of the *yashiki* or palace. The condemned man, dressed in his robes of ceremony, and wearing his wings of hempen cloth, sits in the centre. An officer acts as chief witness, with a second witness under him. Two officers, who act as *kaishaku*, are on the right and left of the condemned man; four officers are placed at the corners of the mats. The *kaishaku*, as in the former case, offers to execute the last wishes of the condemned. A dirk nine and a half inches long is placed before him on a stand. In this case the dirk is a real dirk, which the man takes and stabs himself with on the left side, below the navel, drawing it across to the right side. At this moment, when he leans forward in pain, the *kaishaku* on the left-hand side cuts off the head. The *kaishaku* on the right-hand side takes up the head, and shows it to the sheriff. The body is given to the relations for burial. In most cases the property of the deceased is confiscated.

3rd. *Self-immolation of a Daimio on account of disgrace.*—When a Daimio had been guilty of treason or offended against the Tycoon, inasmuch as the family was disgraced, and an apology could neither be offered nor accepted, the offending Daimio was condemned to *hara-kiri*. Calling his councillors around him, he confided to them his last will and

testament for transmission to the Tycoon. Then, clothing himself in his court dress, he disembowelled himself, and cut his own throat. His councillors then reported the matter to the Government, and a coroner was sent to investigate it. To him the retainers handed the last will and testament of their lord and he took it to the Gorôjiu (first council), who transmitted it to the Tycoon. If the offence was heinous, such as would involve the ruin of the whole family, by the clemency of the Tycoon, half the property might be confiscated, and half returned to the heir; if the offence was trivial, the property was inherited intact by the heir, and the family did not suffer.

In all cases where the criminal disembowels himself of his own accord without condemnation and without investigation, inasmuch as he is no longer able to defend himself, the offence is considered as non-proven, and the property is not confiscated. In the year 1869, a motion was brought forward in the Japanese parliament by one Ono Seigorô, a clerk of the house, advocating the abolition of the practice of *hara-kiri*. Two hundred members out of a house of 209 voted against the motion, which was supported by only three speakers, six members not voting on either side. In this debate the *seppuku*, or *hara-kiri*, was called "the very shrine of the Japanese national spirit, and the embodiment in practice of devotion to principle," "a great ornament to the empire," "a pillar of the constitution," "a valuable institution, tending to the honour of the nobles, and based

on a compassionate feeling towards the official caste," "a pillar of religion and a spur to virtue." The whole debate (which is well worth reading, and an able translation of which by Mr. Aston has appeared in a recent Blue Book) shows the affection with which the Japanese cling to the traditions of a chivalrous past. It is worthy of notice that the proposer, Ono Seigorô, who on more than one occasion rendered himself conspicuous by introducing motions based upon an admiration of our Western civilization, was murdered not long after this debate took place.

There are many stories on record of extraordinary heroism being displayed in the *hara-kiri*. The case of a young fellow, only twenty years old, of the Choshiu clan, which was told me the other day by an eye-witness, deserves mention as a marvellous instance of determination. Not content with giving himself the one necessary cut, he slashed himself thrice horizontally and twice vertically. Then he stabbed himself in the throat until the dirk protruded on the other side, with its sharp edge to the front; setting his teeth in one supreme effort, he drove the knife forward with both hands through his throat, and fell dead.

One more story and I have done. During the revolution, when the Tycoon, beaten on every side, fled ignominiously to Yedo, he is said to have determined to fight no more, but to yield everything. A member of his second council went to him and said, "Sir, the only way for you now to retrieve the honour

of the family of Tokugawa is to disembowel yourself; and to prove to you that I am sincere and disinterested in what I say, I am here ready to disembowel myself with you." The Tycoon flew into a great rage, saying that he would listen to no such nonsense, and left the room. His faithful retainer, to prove his honesty, retired to another part of the castle, and solemnly performed the *hara-kiri*.

Date Due

NOV 1 6
JAN 9
APR 9 '52
NOV 3 0 '60
DEC 7 '60
NOV 3 0 1966

No. 293 BEMCO

PL890
.A2S4

34137

ST. OLAF COLLEGE
PL890.A5 S4
Seitz, Don C[illegible] Monogatari; tales from old and n
3 0111 00245 9500